VERMONT *Quarterly*

THE MONUMENT OF COLONEL SETH WARNER IN ROXBURY, CONNECTICUT

VERMONT HISTORICAL SOCIETY

VOL. XX
No. 4

OCTOBER
1952

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The Quarterly and its companion monthly, VHS News and Notes, are sent without charge to all members of the Society.

NEW SERIES • Price 1 dollar • VOL. XX NO. 4

VERMONT
Quarterly

A MAGAZINE OF HISTORY

October 1952

The PROCEEDINGS *of the*
VERMONT HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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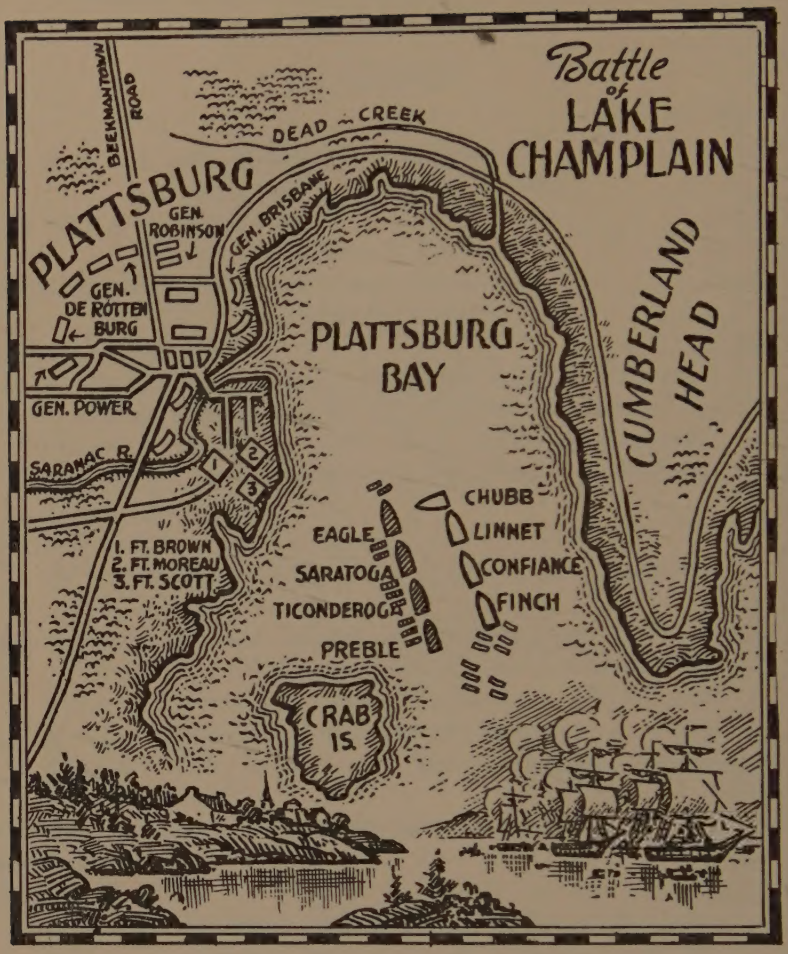
Vermont Quarterly: A Magazine of History, published at Kilburn St., Burlington, Vt., by the Vermont Historical Society. Offices, Library, Reading-room and Museum, State Library Building, Montpelier, Vermont.
Re-entered as second-class matter, April 21, 1950, at the Post Office in Burlington, Vt., under the Act of August 24, 1912. One dollar per copy.



MAP OF BATTLE AREAS—PLATTSBURG AND PLATTSBURG BAY

"Never was a shower of hail so thick as the shot whistling about our ears. Were you to see my jacket, waistcoat, and trousers, you would be astonished to know how I escaped as I did, for they are literally torn all to rags with shot and splinters; the upper part of my hat was also shot away. There is one of the marines who was in Trafalgar action with Lord Nelson, who says it was a mere flea-bite in comparison with this."—*Midshipman William Lee* of the *Confiance*

THE BATTLE OF PLATTSBURG

By WILLIAM R. FOLSOM

This informal paper by Mr. Folsom whose theme is the battle which made history on Lake Champlain in the War of 1812 is the final paper in the series dealing with Vermonters in battle. Records are still not complete on the details that have to do with the individual Vermonters who had some part in the action, but the picture as a whole emerges clearly in the author's excellent version. Editor.

AT THE OPENING of the nineteenth century, what was the situation of these United States of ours?

The Revolution had been fought and won seventeen years before. The quiet, modest man who had labored so faithfully to bring about the victory and whose personal character and influence had done so much to mold the diverse interests and sectional prejudices of the Colonies into something resembling a nation, was dead.

John Adams, former village schoolmaster, country lawyer, Harvard graduate, and founder of the most distinguished family in America, sat in the presidential chair. President Adams speedily realized that his exalted office was not entirely a bed of roses. The young nation, like the new boy in school, found itself abused and bullied by the older and more powerful European countries. In a military sense the Colonies had achieved their independence; in a political and economic sense, the war still went on.

Commerce is the life blood of a nation, and this fact was particularly true in the case of the immature American republic. The Colonies were just passing out of the first pioneer stage. Beyond the fringe of coast towns, the people were struggling to carve out for themselves farms and villages from the surrounding forest. Money was scarce; poverty and privation were the accustomed and accepted burdens. There were few manufactories. From land and sea came the things necessary to sustain life, but the comforts and conveniences of life could be had only through foreign trade.

Ever since the Middle Ages, the Barbary States, Algiers, Morocco, Tunis and Tripoli, had played the part of the modern racketeer. Their ships of war captured without discrimination the trading vessels of

European nations wherever they could be found in the Mediterranean. The nations whose rights on the high seas were thus shamefully abused, resorted to the payment of tribute, both in money and goods, to obtain immunity for their merchant vessels. To this dubious practice the United States became a party upon achieving independence. Before the death of Washington, American merchant ships proceeding to the Mediterranean were captured by Algerian cruisers, and so frequent and bold were these outrages, that Congress in 1794 passed "An Act to Provide a Naval Armament" which authorized President Washington to provide by purchase, or otherwise, equip and employ four ships to carry 44 guns each and 2 ships to carry 36 guns each. Construction was immediately started on 6 vessels, among them the frigate *Constitution* of glorious memory.

This, however, was but the beginning of a long series of oppressive measures taken by European powers against the new nation across the sea.

In 1793, the century-old conflict between England and France broke out anew in a war which was to involve all Europe in a carnage of blood and destruction very similar to that which so nearly destroyed the civilized nations of the globe 121 years later. One effect of this war was to drive the trade-carrying vessels of both belligerents off the seas. The youthful neutral republic, therefore, fell heir to something approaching a monopoly of European commerce, and it eventually came to pass that nearly three-fourths of the world's carrying trade fell into the hands of American ship owners.

The warring powers, England and France, were locked in a mortal struggle. French armies were overrunning the territory of rival European nations, yet France was unable to get at her hated adversary across the Channel for the British fleet barred the way. If Napoleon was supreme on land, England was still "Mistress of the Seas." So it came about that each belligerent began devoting its energies to the destruction of the neutral trade which America was carrying on with the other.

The problems of the Adams Administration were many and vexatious, and presumably the harassed President drew a sigh of relief as the dawn of the new century drew near. In the closing months of his official life, he made two appointments, both of which were destined to be of great importance to the future welfare of the United States: he selected one John Marshall, a former Revolutionary soldier and member of Congress from Virginia, for the position of Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of the United States; and on a

gloomy day in February, 1800, signed, together with a wearisome mass of other papers, a warrant appointing Thomas Macdonough, an unknown country lad of sixteen, a midshipman in the United States Navy.

Doubtlessly, young Macdonough was delighted to get away from his monotonous duties as clerk in the local village store. There was nothing inspiring in the daily weighing of coffee, tea and sugar, or the slow and labored process of drawing molasses from a cold barrel in the cellar. It can be imagined that, like most boys, he longed for a life of adventure; and this was especially so in his case, for in his veins ran the blood of militant ancestors.

Thomas Macdonough, Jr., was born at a place called the Trappe, near New Castle, Delaware, on the last day of the year 1783, one of four brothers, the oldest of whom had served in the United States Navy and had lost a leg in the battle between the American frigate *Constellation* and the French man of war *l'Insurgente*. His father, Thomas Macdonough, Sr., had practiced medicine in the country about the Trappe until 1776, when he joined the army, having received a major's commission from the Continental Congress. The young Scotch physician evidently found the life of a soldier not altogether devoid of peril and excitement. He was in the thick of the battle of Long Island, where the raw American militia were flanked out of their strong position on Brooklyn Heights and well nigh destroyed by Sir William Howe's veteran divisions. Major Macdonough was wounded in this action and received the thanks of Washington himself for gallant conduct on the field.

Upon the younger Thomas, a boy in his 'teens, his father's stories of his stirring battles, told in the long winter evenings, doubtless made a vivid impression, augmented by his older brother's description of the fierce fight at sea between the *Constellation* and *l'Insurgente*. If the young lad longed for a life of action, his wishes were to be speedily gratified, for the rest of his life, in large measure, was to consist of stirring adventure.

We can imagine that Thomas Macdonough was a very happy boy when his midshipman's commission arrived, followed by orders to join the U.S.S. *Ganges*, about to sail for the West Indies as a protection to our merchant vessels against attacks by French cruisers. Midshipman Macdonough's time was fully taken up on this, his maiden voyage, in becoming familiar with the complicated mechanism of the man-of-war of his day. It was his duty to learn the intricate functions of spars, yards, shrouds, and sails, the organization and duties of

officers and crew. From the schoolmaster, whom every ship of war carried, he was to learn the principles of navigation and sidereal astronomy.

On the warships of that day, discipline was often harsh and severe; the food unsavory and ill balanced. On a tropical voyage, such as this, there were few comforts and conveniences; no ice plants, no distilling apparatus, no laundry. Yellow fever broke out on board the *Ganges*, and the vessel became a charnel house. Midshipman Macdonough came down with the disease, but his strong constitution prevailed in the end. When the ship reached Cuba, he was sent ashore at Havana; and after some time spent in a wretched Spanish hospital, he gained strength enough to sail for the United States. On the voyage home his ship was captured by an English cruiser off the Delaware Capes, and Macdonough was put ashore at Norfolk, Virginia, whence, emaciated, destitute and literally in rags, he made his way home.

The following year Macdonough was assigned to the famous frigate *Constitution* and made a two years' voyage in her to the Mediterranean. On his return he was ordered to the cruiser *Philadelphia* and sailed again for the Mediterranean. The United States having at last declared war on Tripoli, the *Philadelphia*, Captain Bainbridge, was sent out to join our squadron in those waters. The *Philadelphia*, falling in with a pirate vessel from Morocco, pursued and captured her. Macdonough was sent aboard with a prize crew under instructions to proceed to Gibraltar—a striking tribute to the character and ability of a lad of twenty. While the captured prize was at Gibraltar, Commodore Preble arrived at that port. Macdonough joined his flagship, intending to remain aboard until they met the *Philadelphia*. From a passing British frigate they learned that the *Philadelphia* had struck a reef off Tripoli, had been seized with all on board and towed into the harbor of Tripoli. Captain Bainbridge, his officers and crew were held in close confinement for over a year and a half, but while thus in the enemy's power, Bainbridge contrived to send a letter to Commodore Preble, advising him that it might be possible to enter the harbor in a small ship and capture and destroy the *Philadelphia*.

In the meantime Macdonough had been transferred to the U.S.S. *Enterprise*, Lieutenant Stephen Decatur commanding. On his father's side Decatur was of French descent, his grandfather being a native of La Rocelle, France. Keen, impetuous, reckless, daring, this young officer was to become not only the idol of the American navy, but the

fame of his exploits was to be known throughout the land. A century afterward his name still stands a symbol for gallant courage upon the sea.

Upon learning of the plan to destroy the *Philadelphia*, Decatur at once volunteered for the proposed expedition. A short time previously the *Enterprise* had captured a small ship of the enemy called the *Matisco*. This vessel was chosen for the attempted attack and renamed the *Intrepid*. Decatur was selected to command her. He mustered the crew of the *Enterprise* and called for volunteers. The crew stepped forward as one man. Decatur chose his lieutenants, Joseph Bainbridge, James Lawrence, whose dying words, "Don't give up the ship," are not forgotten, and his favorite midshipman, Thomas Macdonough. Sixty of the crew were selected and the whole party went aboard the *Intrepid*. From the frigate *Constitution* Decatur obtained the services of her pilot, Salvador Catalano, who was well acquainted with the difficult navigation of Tripoli harbor.

An hour after receiving orders, the *Intrepid* weighed anchor, accompanied by the *Siren*, whose duties were to stand by and rescue the crew of the *Intrepid* in case of her very probable destruction. Combustibles for setting the *Philadelphia* on fire and several weeks' provisions were put aboard the ship.

Tripoli was in sight on the afternoon of February 7th, 1805, but the *Intrepid* stood off and anchored after dark about a mile from the town to avoid suspicion. The wind was blowing a gale, the sea rough, and the pilot and most of the officers considered their position unsafe. The *Intrepid* got under way and stood out to sea.

When the weather cleared, the *Intrepid* once more approached the harbor; at dusk she was three miles off the entrance with the *Siren* three miles astern. The wind went down with the sun, and Decatur gave up the plan of waiting for the *Siren*, telling his crew "the fewer the number, the greater the honor." Details of the attack were gone over, and officers and men assigned to their respective positions. "Philadelphia" was the watchword.

The little vessel crept silently into the harbor. A new moon unfortunately gave enough light to disclose their position; however, the first enemy battery was passed in safety, and the *Intrepid* drew near to the *Philadelphia*. The enemy promptly hailed. Catalano, the pilot, obeying instructions, replied that they had lost their anchors in the storm and asked permission to tie up to the *Philadelphia* until new anchors could be obtained from shore.

When the ships were about twenty yards apart, the wind shifted

and left the *Intrepid* without headway directly under the guns of the *Philadelphia*. This was the crisis and the fate of the expedition hung by a hair. Decatur coolly ordered a boat lowered. A rope was carried across the intervening distance and made fast to the *Philadelphia's* chains; meanwhile, a boat from that ship brought over a rope and made it fast to the *Intrepid*. "Americanos!" came the cry of warning. The next instant the two ships touched and Decatur shouted the order to board. Led by their officers the Americans gained the *Philadelphia's* deck. The hand-to-hand fight was short. The Tripolitan sailors, confused and taken by surprise by the sudden onslaught, were either cut down or driven over the side.

To Midshipmen Macdonough and Laws was given the task of seizing the berth deck and forward store-room. This they did, and in five minutes the *Philadelphia* was clear of the enemy. In less than twenty minutes she was on fire and the attacking party back on board the *Intrepid*.

As the fire gained headway, flames shot out from the gun ports, and in a few moments the ship was a writhing mass of smoke and flame. The waters of the harbor threw back the lurid glare upon the sea wall, shipping, and water front. As the guns of the *Philadelphia* became hot, their charges exploded, and their roar mingled with that of the shore batteries, now concentrating their fire on the *Intrepid*. The crew of that ship gave three hearty cheers, got out their sweeps, and aided by a light wind, made good their escape.

Such was the successful outcome of a most gallant feat of arms. Patience, an indomitable courage, perfect discipline under trying conditions made possible the brilliant victory.

Lord Nelson himself, although busy at the time in blockading the French fleet in Toulon harbor, found time to characterize the enterprise as "the most bold and daring act of the age." High praise, if you like, but, on the whole, a very fair description of the achievement. Congress gave Decatur a sword; he richly deserved it.

During the next six years Macdonough served aboard various ships of the navy, including the *Constitution*, leaving that ship in the summer of 1812 to take command of the vessels at Portland, Maine, and going from that point to Lake Champlain to take command of a fleet of ships to be built for the purpose of maintaining control of that vital waterway leading to the heart of New England. This program was of the utmost importance, for America had, at last, declared war on Great Britain.

Truly young Thomas Macdonough had seen much and done much

in his eleven years of maritime life. Who can measure the influence of those fair and smiling seas of the Ancient World upon a raw country boy familiar only with the climatic changes of an American country village? Did he, in some forgotten Aegean harbor, hear a faint sound of weeping and see, through the dim moonlight, the figure of desolate Niobe, mourning for her dead sons? Ashore on some island of Ancient Greece, did he find the anemone—the spirit flower—in bloom, whose delicate petals were said to come from the life blood of Adonis? When the fleet was concentrated in the harbor of Syracuse, did he see Arethusa beside her fountain? Among such surroundings and influences, it is not strange that Thomas Macdonough developed a love for beauty and an appreciation of the finer things of the spirit—gifts from the old gods themselves.

Early in the year 1812, the Committee on Foreign Affairs in Congress made a report, setting forth, among other things, that for more than seven years the British government had carried on a series of hostile acts against the rights and interests of the United States. The report referred at length to the interference with American neutral trade, the claimed right to search vessels sailing under the American flag, and the impressment of American citizens and sailors into the naval service of Great Britain.

With this declaration the Committee proceeded to introduce a bill declaring war on Great Britain. This bill passed the Senate by a vote of 19 to 13; the House concurred by a vote of 79 to 49. President Madison, by proclamation, declared war June 18, 1812.

A few days after the declaration of war, Napoleon at the head of his Grand Army of 40,000 men (the greatest army the world had ever seen up to that time) began the invasion of Russia. Did the conqueror of Europe aim at the conquest of the world? England must maintain her supremacy of the sea; without that—the deluge.

England, fighting for her life, impressed American seamen when and where she could. By January 1, 1811, Lord Castlereagh admitted that there had been 1600 cases of the sort. Great Britain defended her policy on the ground that British citizenship was eternal and unchangeable—"once a subject, always a subject"—and that no British subject by changing his allegiance and becoming the citizen of another nation could destroy his primary allegiance to his native land. On the other hand, America maintained that a foreigner, after five years' residence in the country and after complying with certain forms, became one of its citizens, the same as if native born.

Of the war on land there is little to say, for little was done; a few

abortive invasions by both sides along the Niagara and Lake Champlain frontiers produced no results of importance. One might almost be pardoned for saying that for the most part, little, so-called armies marched to and fro across the Canadian border, making faces at their enemies. Our government—as on other occasions—had made no adequate preparation, thus being obliged to do what they could with untrained, undisciplined volunteers.

Our commanding generals, however, mediocre though they may have been with the sword, were magnificent with the pen: "I am destined to and determined on the attack of Montreal at the head of an army of 8000 men," writes General James Wilkinson, "if not," he prudently adds, "prevented by some Act of God." Wilkinson was an officer of unsavory reputation who was courtmartialed in 1811, charged with treason, but acquitted. At the close of the war, he was discharged from the U. S. Service. There is one bright spot on his record: he marched with Benedict Arnold to Quebec—the most heroic march in American history.

"The Rubicon is now passed," cries General Wade Hampton, "and all that remains is to push forward to the capitol."

The St. Lawrence, however, was not the Rubicon, and General Hampton not Caesar. General Hampton came from a long line of military ancestors and one of his descendants was a famous cavalry commander in the Civil War. It is said, however, that General Hampton in 1813 left the service "for his country's good," a rather neat way of putting it. The Vermont historian, Frederick Van De Water, calls the American Army generals of that day "animated museum pieces." In the fall of 1813, the 3rd Brigade of Vermont militia moved across Lake Champlain as a reinforcement. This left forty miles of Vermont frontier defenseless; it was also harvest season and many of the men went home. Two weeks after these stirring dispatches saw the light, one of these generals was quietly in camp at the village of Plattsburg, the other building winter quarters on the American side of the St. Lawrence. There is one bright spot in this gloomy picture: General Alexander Macomb, assigned to the command of the northern frontier, through courage and good generalship defeated the British army under Sir George Prevost at Plattsburg and drove it back to Canada. Twenty-one years later, he was made general-in-chief of the Army of the United States.

A glance at the vote on the declaration of war in both Houses of Congress shows clearly that sectional prejudice played a large part in the matter. If we take the line between the states of New York and

Pennsylvania as a basis of comparison, we see the vote north of that line to be more than 2 to 1 against war, the vote south of that line more than 3 to 1 in favor of war.

It can be seen that the country as a whole presented anything but a united front on the subject of war with England. Over this question hung the dark shadow of slavery—plainly to be seen, even at this early day of the nation's history. Forty years later, a gaunt, awkward circuit lawyer, one Abraham Lincoln of Illinois, was to repeat the ancient warning: "A house divided against itself cannot stand." This prophecy came near being fulfilled in the year 1812. A few years before, the vast area of Louisiana had been purchased from Napoleon. This the North opposed because it added greatly to the slave territory of the South, and consequently to the growing political power of that section. Success in the coming war would greatly increase the political influence of the South.

On the other hand, many of the great slave-holding planters of the South had no burning desire to see Canada captured by our armies—thus bringing a vast amount of free territory under the political control of the North.

As it turned out, the war, for the most part, was to be fought and won upon the sea. Thomas Macdonough was to play his part thereon and win enduring fame.

After a few months on the Portland station, Macdonough received instructions from President Madison to take command of the vessels on Lake Champlain, the order bearing the date of September 12, 1812.

"Proceeded thither," writes the young lieutenant in his journal, "across country through the notch of the White Mountains—partly on horseback with a valise behind and a country boy only in company to return with my horses. Arrived, fatigued, at Burlington on the lake in about four days." Fatigued he well might have been, for, presumably, twelve years of life at sea had not improved his horsemanship. Four days of rough trail over two mountain ranges must have been, literally, a sore trial.

One might naturally wonder what this deep water sailor was to do on this remote inland lake. In answer it can be said that this historic body of water was the back-door route to New England. It was the Lieutenant's grave duty and responsibility to maintain control of this vital water route by capture or defeat of the enemy fleet which would surely be sent against him.

Lake Champlain is a long, narrow lake extending from Canada nearly to the Hudson River, if the tributary waters of Lake George

are to be taken into account. Champlain's outlet, the Richelieu River, empties into the St. Lawrence a few miles below Montreal; thus we have a connected water passage leading to within some 60 miles of Albany.

An invading army, coming overland from Canada, was not to be seriously considered. There were no roads worth the name. The food, ammunition, artillery and equipment necessary for an army could not be transported through the wilderness which lay between Canada and the large New England towns. Lake Champlain, however, afforded a comparatively easy route for an army's progress in bateaux, provided a British fleet, sufficiently strong to sweep away all opposition, were leading the way.

Twice during the Revolution Colonial forces had checked British armies under Sir Guy Carleton and Sir John Burgoyne, coming down from the North across its waters. The little American fleet under Benedict Arnold had fought so fiercely at Valcour Island that it had prevented Sir Guy Carleton from holding possession of its shores.

To the young naval lieutenant, as he looked from the little frontier village of Burlington across the gray waters of the lake to the snow-capped ranges of the Adirondacks, there must have come a sharp realization of the difficulties of the task before him. It was his duty to establish a base on this wilderness lake, build a fleet from the trees in the forest, and bring up his supplies, guns and ammunition from the sea coast cities 200 miles distant. When this was done, there still remained the battle to be fought with an active, seasoned, well-disciplined opponent, who had at his disposal the wealth and resources of the British Empire.

During the winter of 1812–13 Lieutenant Macdonough established his headquarters at Burlington and labored mightily through the bitter winter at the task of putting the few ships at his disposal in condition for battle. When the ice broke up in April, he was ready to take the lake with a modest squadron of five vessels: the sloop *President*, 10 guns, Lieutenant Thomas Macdonough commanding; the sloop *Growler*, 11 guns; the sloop *Eagle*, 11 guns; and two gunboats, with two guns each.

In order to be near the Canadian boundary line, Macdonough anchored his vessels in Plattsburg Bay, 25 miles from the border, so that he might protect trading vessels on the lake from attack by the British gunboats which were in the habit of coming up the Richelieu River for that purpose.

Presently disaster overtook the fleet—if such it could be called.

"The sloop, *President*, which was the flag," wrote the young commander, "having been run on shore and injured in her bottom, it became necessary that she should be hove out and repaired before she could go on service."

On July 2nd, news having been received that enemy gunboats had come out of the Richelieu River into the broad lake, Lieutenant Macdonough ordered the *Growler* and *Eagle*, then at anchor in Plattsburg Bay, to run down to the foot of the lake and keep the British vessels on their own side of the border.

Obeying his orders, Lieutenant Smith with the two sloops reached the line, favored by a southerly breeze. At this point he did a very imprudent thing: the wind and current being in his favor, he proceeded on down the river in search of the enemy gunboats.

At 5 P. M., being some six miles over the line, Lieutenant Smith attempted to get back to the lake. This he found a difficult task. Wind and current were now adverse and the narrow channel made short tacks imperative. Little progress was made, and in the early morning three British gunboats came up the river and attacked the slow-moving sloops. Infantry detachments now appeared on either bank and opened a hot fire of musketry. There could be but one result: the *Eagle* was sunk and the *Growler* captured.

"I am decidedly of the opinion that the vessels would not have been lost, had they not gone so far over the line into such narrow waters, where the musketry of the enemy told from either shore," writes Macdonough to Captain Chauncey. A very just criticism; you will note, however, that there is no personal reproach.

"You are to understand," writes the Secretary of the Navy to Macdonough shortly after the loss of the *Growler* and *Eagle*, "that upon no account are you to suffer the enemy to gain the ascendency on Lake Champlain." Once more Macdonough began the building up of another fleet.

That the Navy Department was satisfied with Macdonough's services on the lake is evidenced by an order of July 24th wherein Lieutenant Macdonough was promoted to the rank of Master Commandant. From the fact that he was in command of a fleet, he was hereafter very generally given the title of Commodore.

Nothing of much moment happened during the rest of the open season of 1813 on the lake. In December, Macdonough went into winter quarters at Vergennes, Vermont.

In the selection of Vergennes as a base, Macdonough displayed judgment and foresight, quite in accordance with his character and

training. Vergennes was situated at the head of navigation on Otter Creek—La Rivière Aux Loutres of the old French regime—seven miles from its entrance to Lake Champlain. The creek, although deep, was so narrow and crooked a hostile fleet could not possibly hope to get up the stream, exposed to fire the whole way. Burlington, where a strong body of troops was camped, was only 21 miles distant by direct road. Dead Creek and its marsh were a protection to the west. Other roads led to Boston and the South. There was an abundance of pine and oak available for ship-building and iron could be obtained from the nearby town of Monkton. In Vergennes itself were eight forges, a blast furnace, a rolling mill, a wire factory, besides grist and sawmills. Vergennes, the oldest city in Vermont, was evidently a place of importance 139 years ago.

Mindful of his orders to keep control of the lake at all hazards, Commodore Macdonough began, during the winter, preparations for the building of a much larger and more powerful fleet than had hitherto appeared upon the lake.

The keel of the Commodore's flagship, the *Saratoga*, was laid March 7, 1814; on April 11 she went down the ways into the waters of Otter Creek. Forty days before, her frames and planking had been trees growing along the foothills of the Green Mountains.

It was feared that some enterprising officer of His Majesty's Navy might come up the lake with a raiding squadron, seize some craft and sink it at the mouth of Otter Creek and thus block up the half-finished vessels at Vergennes. To guard against this, Macdonough erected a strong battery of 3 twelve-pound guns and a field-piece at the mouth of the Creek.

The weather was unusually mild in the spring of 1814. By April 2, the northern end of the lake was open and on May 9, Captain Daniel Pring of the Royal Navy, in command of the new 16-gun brig *Linnet*, together with 5 sloops and 13 galleys, entered the lake and on the 14th appeared off the mouth of Otter Creek and opened fire on the American battery. After an engagement lasting an hour and a half, Pring drew off his ships to the north. One gun was dismounted and two men wounded in the battery while several British galleys were damaged and some small boats shot adrift.

"One seaman was killed," says Captain Pring in his report, "and two marines slightly wounded in the gunboats. The battery appeared to be strongly manned by artillerymen and the enemy's gunboats were there with many seamen landed. I think I had a view of my adversary, Commodore Macdonough. Every tree on the lake shore," he adds in disgust, "appears to have a Jonathan stationed behind it."

The equipment of the ships was a most difficult undertaking. Transportation at the fag end of a New England winter was well nigh impossible. Roads, if they could be called such, were almost impassable and made the heavy loading of transport wagons prohibitive. It took 80 teams to bring up one consignment of naval stores from Troy, New York, to Vergennes, and then three large cables had to be left behind. Trained seamen and gunners were hard to procure and, as a substitute, General Macomb in command of the army sent 400 soldiers to Macdonough at Vergennes. "They are Vermonters," writes the General, "and are probably acquainted with the lake; if not," he adds with true Yankee spirit, "they can be taught."

In February, the Secretary of the Navy, William Jones, wrote Macdonough: "Mr. Cassin says there is a new boat, 120 feet long, near Vergennes, intended for a steam boat. If she will answer, you are authorized to purchase her for the use of the Navy."

Evidently the Commodore did not consider this newfangled way of propelling ships reliable enough for the handling of a ship-of-war in battle, for before her engine and machinery were installed, he bought the vessel, named her the *Ticonderoga*, and had her rigged as a schooner; she carried 17 guns. The 10-gun sloop, *President*, the 7-gun sloop *Preble*, the 6-gun sloop, *Montgomery*, and six gunboats with 2 guns each, completed the squadron. The new gunboats were powerful craft of their type, being 75 feet long, with a 15-foot beam and carrying 30 oars.

The last week in May the flotilla sailed from Otter Creek for Plattsburg. From the harbor Macdonough wrote the Secretary of War: "I find the Saratoga a fine ship; she sails and works well; the schooner is also a fine vessel and bears her metal as well as was expected. The galleys are also remarkably fine vessels."

The work was done and well done; the weapon forged. "The squadron," concludes the Commodore, "is ready for service."

During the summer another fine ship was added to the fleet. The keel of the brig *Eagle* was laid down July 23rd; the ship was launched August 11 and joined the fleet at Plattsburg August 27—a record performance which illustrates vividly the skill of the New England ship-carpenters.

The fact that the action between the British and American fleets was fought on the narrow waters of an inland lake has possibly given the impression that the ships were small affairs with little power or range. This was far from the fact. Macdonough's flagship, the *Saratoga*, and the British flagship, *Confiance*, were somewhat smaller than the ocean-going frigate *Constitution*, but larger than John Paul

Jones' *Bon Homme Richard*, *Wasp*, *Hornet* and other ships of the navy of that day.

The sum of approximately $12,420 was expended for the *Saratoga's* guns. The entire ship, rating about 734 tons, cost $17,140, and the total estimated cost of the fleet was $215,640.

Meanwhile the enemy had not been idle. The menacing shadow which had overhung Europe so long had lifted. The little man in the three-cornered hat who had led his triumphant armies across an entire continent, had surrendered. Napoleon's abdication had released Lord Wellington's veteran army from continental service. Several of these divisions were immediately sent out to Canada.

By September Sir George Prevost, Governor of Canada and commander-in-chief of her armies, had concentrated some 14,000 of these troops at the little village of Champlain, a few miles from the border.

The British plan of campaign was quite similar to the one which had proved so alluring to the War Ministry during the Revolution. Twice during those eventful years British armies had been sent down Lake Champlain with the purpose of pushing through to the head waters of the Hudson in an endeavor to establish contact with other forces ascending that river. With the Hudson River—Lake Champlain line controlled and fortified, the Colonies would be cut in two, and the resistance of the two areas, thus divided, could be much more easily overcome, especially so, as bases could be established near the very heart of New England.

If the army went by water, a fleet was essential to protect the transports and supply craft. If it marched by land, a fleet was equally necessary to maintain the line of supply and act as a supporting flank to the army.

Isle aux Noix, an island in the Richelieu River some twenty miles from the border, was chosen as the British naval base. Captain George Downie of the Royal Navy, who had been recalled from Lake Ontario for the purpose, was placed in command of the British fleet.

In checking over the units of both fleets, it would appear that Commodore Downie's squadron possessed a slight superiority as to tonnage and guns; as to weight of broadside, they were practically equal.

H.M.S. Confiance, the flagship, was the largest ship in either squadron, a frigate of over 1200 tons, 146 feet long, carrying 26 long 24-pounders in broadside and one on the forecastle, mounted on a circle, 2 long 18 pounders, besides 10 carronades.

Commodore Macdonough had given much thought concerning the strategy to be employed in the coming battle. He knew that to meet the powerful enemy squadron with its veteran officers and crews of the Royal Navy in the open lake would court disaster. The *Confiance* through her speed and heavy guns could pound his flagship to pieces at long range.

Plattsburg, a country village of 1500 inhabitants, was situated at the head of Plattsburg Bay on the northwest side of the lake. It possessed four public buildings: a church, a jail, an inn and a courthouse. It was important to the British interests as a center of trade.

Following the enactment of the Embargo Act, a steady flow of illicit traffic (we regret to say) took its way down Lake Champlain to Canada. These things took place over 100 years ago, yet even today the map of Vermont brings them back to memory with its Smuggler's Notch and Smuggler's Carry.

"In fact, my Lord," writes Sir George Prevost to Lord Bathurst, "two thirds of the army in Canada are at this moment eating beef provided by American contractors, drawn principally from the states of New York and Vermont." On the Vermont side of the lake the narrow forest trails and roads were too few and too narrow to contain the droves of cattle on their way to Canada. "Like Heards of Buffalos," writes General Izard, the army commander on Lake Champlain, "they press through the forests, making paths for themselves. Were it not for these supplies, the British forces in Canada would be soon suffering from famine or their government subjected to enormous expense for their maintenance."

During the years 1807–1812 the most elusive of the smuggling craft was the *Black Snake*, a vessel employed by a St. Albans merchant to transport potash to Canada. Vermonters were very bitter against Jefferson's Embargo, which prevented disposal of what was often their only salable product—potash. Wood ashes were the foundation of potash, which had a ready sale in Canada and was the principal frontier export. At times this sold for $70 to $80 per ton, and potash was used in a variety of medicines, returning to the farmers in the form of salaratus and baking soda.

To capture Plattsburg and obtain possession and control of the Lake Champlain region with its rich resources of supplies was the immediate objective of the British forces in the approaching campaign.

Commodore Macdonough, therefore, brought his ships to anchor in Plattsburg Bay with a two-fold purpose. First, he wished to protect the town, as his squadron would be on the flank of the invading army,

should it approach Plattsburg by the lake-shore road. Second, the position of his fleet inside the bay would force the enemy to attack him at a disadvantage.

Lake Champlain is a long, narrow trough of water between two mountain ranges, running approximately north and south. The British ships could not ascend the Richelieu River to the lake without the advantage of a northerly wind, as the river and north end of the lake were too narrow to allow the heavy ships to tack or beat against the wind with much success.

Plattsburg Bay is two miles long, extending inland a little west of north. It opens to the south. Captain Downie's squadron, coming up the lake, by favor of a northerly wind, would be obliged to beat against this wind in entering Plattsburg Bay. Thus the British ships would be obliged to approach the American squadron bows on and would be exposed to a broadside or raking fire from Macdonough's entire line of battle.

In August, Sir George Prevost moved up to Isle aux Noix, where he proceeded to concentrate his forces for the proposed attack on Plattsburg.

At this moment of peril the American authorities for some unknown reason determined to remove the troops from the lake area, leaving to General Macomb at the head of 1500 undisciplined and worn-out men the well-nigh impossible task of defending Plattsburg (the military key to the Champlain region) against attack by 14,000 veteran troops, flushed with their recent victories over Napoleon's armies.

General Macomb prepared to do what he could. The Saranac River divided the village of Plattsburg from north to south. He built three redoubts on the south side of the river and a blockhouse and battery near its mouth. He proposed to send out small parties of militia to delay the river crossings under the protection and support of the redoubts.

It is difficult to determine the number of Vermont troops taking part in the land battle of Plattsburg, as their regimental organization is obscure. At the end of August General Macomb had his headquarters at Plattsburg; he commanded about 3500 troops. Up to this time the American army under various commanders had done little or nothing. In July, 1813 when the American army was being assembled at Burlington, a British detachment landed at Plattsburg and destroyed the barracks and much other property. During two years of war, scarcely any steps had been taken to protect the national capital and surrounding country. A small British army marched unopposed

through Virginia and Maryland and burned the city of Washington. There are, however, occasional references to Vermont troops. In 1814, when Gov. George Chittenden declined to call out the state militia to resist the invasion of northern New York, 80 volunteers from St. Albans went across to Plattsburg where they took an active part in the battle of Sept. 11; and when the British army advanced on Plattsburg, the Green Mountain Boys shouldered their guns and hastened forward to repel the invasion.

On September 6th the British army marched for Plattsburg. Three major generals led their respective brigades. The small parties of militia sent out by General Macomb to delay their progress were brushed aside by the advancing troops, who did not stop to deploy into line, but swung steadily along in column, leaving to their flanking parties the work of driving off the enemy.

When Sir George Prevost reached a ridge on the outskirts of Plattsburg, he saw that to capture the place would not be the easy operation he had anticipated. Below him were the scattered houses of the village, the river with its two bridges, across which the American troops were retreating, the rear files taking up the planks. Beyond the stream were the three redoubts, the blockhouse and batteries and in the bay, riding at anchor, lay the fleet of Macdonough. Sir George concluded to place his divisions in position, bring up his supplies, and plant his batteries while he waited the coming of Commodore Downie with the British fleet. General Macomb moved his sick to Crab Island and gave them a field gun for their protection.

Plattsburg Bay runs north and south; on its eastern side it is bounded by the long point called Cumberland Head. At the southern end of the bay is a low, tree-covered island, called Crab Island. The distance between Cumberland Head and Crab Island is 2.3 miles.

The American ships, the *Eagle*, *Saratoga*, *Ticonderoga* and *Preble*, lay at anchor on a line running from Cumberland Head to Crab Island, well inside the bay and somewhat over a mile from the batteries at Plattsburg.

The *Eagle*, mounting 20 guns with a crew of 120 men formed the head of the line; next lay the *Saratoga*, the flagship, 26 guns, 210 men. After her came the schooner *Ticonderoga*, 17 guns, 110 men; At the southern end of the line was the sloop *Preble*, 7 guns, 30 men. In the rear of the line were the 10 gunboats. Two of these lay a little north and behind the *Eagle* as support for that end of the line. The others were stationed opposite the intervals between the major ships, about 40 rods to their rear. Each boat carried an average crew of 35 men.

Macdonough's position was chosen with judgment and professional

skill, the result of long years of training and experience at sea. The shoal water at both ends of his line of battle would prevent the British ships from turning them and reaching a position from which they could rake the American vessels. Macdonough knew that at this season of the year, the wind, although fresh outside the bay, was apt to be light and shifting inside Cumberland Head, thus reducing the speed of the British vessels as they attempted to reach their battle positions and affording excellent targets for the broadside fire of the whole American fleet.

Macdonough had further taken care to anchor his flagship in such manner that, in case his starboard guns should be dismounted by the enemy's fire, he could turn or "wind" his ship, even though at anchor, and thus bring his port guns into action. He dropped one anchor from the *Saratoga's* bow; another was suspended from the stern. Kedge anchors were carried out on either side of the ship. Thus by cutting one anchor cable and pulling on the kedge lines, he could bring his fresh broadside into action.

Commodore Downie brought his fleet up the lake as far as Isle La Motte, a few miles from Plattsburg, concentrating there on the third of September. The *Confiance* had grounded on coming out of the river, but had been floated without damage. Lack of supplies and equipment for the ships held the fleet here for eight days.

At daylight on Sunday morning, the 11th, taking advantage of a northerly breeze, Commodore Downie weighed anchor for Plattsburg Bay.

The night before the battle, the lookout on the *Saratoga*, as he paced the deck, might have noticed how brilliant were the stars that clear, cold, autumn night, might have noted unconsciously perhaps, the soft lap of the water along the vessel's side. Perhaps—if he dreamed—he might have seen a line of ships stealing out of the night shadows; first, the stained and faded sails of the *Mayflower*, the *Jonas*, the *Grace of God*, the little ships that had carried within them the seed of a new nation across the sea. Then the great fighting ships of another day looming through the darkness: the *Centurion*, the *Neptune*, the *Agamemnon*, the *Victory*. Lofty spars, shadowy sails, grim gun-ports sliding by until they faded and were gone. Ghosts of the past, come to say farewell to this—the last battle fleet of the sailing ships of war.

Sunday morning, the 11th, dawned clear and cool. A light, northerly breeze ruffled the waters of the bay. At nine o'clock the lookout boat off Cumberland Head signaled "Enemy in sight." From the cross-trees of the *Saratoga* over the wooded point of Cumberland Head could

be seen tiny bits of color in motion. They were the battle flags of the approaching British ships.

Commodore Macdonough by inheritance and training was of a deeply religious nature. He now gave a beautiful and impressive illustration of that faith which played so large a share in his daily life.

Following an old custom of the Royal Navy, he mustered his officers on the quarter-deck of the *Saratoga* and with the oncoming ships of the enemy in full view, repeated the prayer of the Church for those about to engage in battle on the sea:—"*Thou givest not alway the battle to the strong, but canst save by many or by few—hear us, thy poor servants—imploring thy help that thou wouldst be a defence unto us against the face of the enemy. Make it clear that Thou art our Saviour and Mighty Deliverer, through Jesus Christ, Our Lord.*"

Commodore Downie, as soon as his four large ships had passed Cumberland Head, hove to and waited for his galleys to come up. His four large ships then filled on the starboard tack and entered the bay. Commodore Downie had determined to lay the *Confiance* across the bows of the *Saratoga*, directing the *Chubb* to support the *Linnet* in an attack on the American brig, *Eagle*, while the *Finch* and the flotilla of gunboats attacked the schooner *Ticonderoga*.

As the British ships came in, Captain Hanley of the *Eagle* fired the first broadside. The distance was too great; the shot fell short, throwing up a cloud of spray on the quarter of the advancing British line. The British brig, *Linnet*, as she passed, fired a broadside at the *Saratoga*. All the balls fell short except one which smashed a coop on the *Saratoga's* deck in which the sailors had confined one of their game cocks. Unharmed, the bird flew up in the rigging and crowed long and loud. As the men laughed and cheered, Macdonough stepped to the breech of his favorite long gun and fired the first shot at the enemy flagship. The 24-pound ball struck the *Confiance* near the bow and ranged the length of the deck, killing and wounding several men. The whole American line now opened fire with their long guns.

The *Confiance* came on steadily without firing a shot, but she was suffering severely from the accurate fire of the American guns. Her two port-bow anchors were shot away, the wind became light and shifting, and she was obliged to come to anchor before reaching her appointed station.

"The enemy," says Macdonough in his official report, "anchored in a line ahead, at about 300 yards distance from my line."

"The *Confiance*," writes Captain Dan Pring of the *Linnet*, "was obliged to anchor within two cables length of her adversary. The

Linnet and *Chubb* soon afterward took their allotted stations something short of that distance, when the crews of both sides cheered and commenced a spirited and close action."

Commodore Downie brought the *Confiance* to anchor with perfect discipline, despite the heavy fire, furled his sails, then discharged his first broadside at the *Saratoga*. The water was calm, the two ships stationary and scarcely two city blocks apart, the 24-pound guns double-shotted. The effect was terrible. The *Saratoga* was nearly blown out of the water. She shivered from truck to keel and nearly every man on deck was knocked down by the concussion.

At the head of the line the battle was fiercely fought. The *Chubb* and *Linnet* opened a heavy fire on the *Eagle*, which the American brig returned so furiously that the *Chubb's* cable was shot away altogether with her bowsprit and main boom. The ship, helpless and drifting down on the American line, was captured.

Captain Pring of the *Linnet*, paying no attention to the loss of his consort, nor to the American gunboats, directed his whole fire on the *Eagle*. The *Confiance* also turned her bow guns on the American brig. For an hour and half the fight continued. At length the springs on the *Eagle's* anchor cable were shot away and she was unable to bring her guns to bear. Captain Henley was obliged to break off the fight. He cut his cable, loosed his topsails, ran down and anchored by the stern between the *Saratoga* and the *Ticonderoga*. From this position he again opened fire on the *Confiance*, but left the *Saratoga* exposed to the fire of both British ships, the *Linnet* now being able to direct a raking fire on the American flagship.

In the meantime things were going from bad to worse aboard the *Saratoga*. The two most powerful ships of the enemy were concentrating their fire upon her. Twice the *Saratoga* had been set on fire by hot shot fired from the *Confiance*. One after another the long guns of the starboard battery were smashed to pieces. The deck was slippery with blood; dead and dying men lay beside their guns. Macdonough was in the thick of it; working like an ordinary gunner, pointing and firing his favorite long gun. Once he was knocked senseless when part of the spanker boom was shot away; again he was hurled across the deck, struck by fragments of the body of his gun captain.

The British gunboats at the other end of the line had behaved in a most gallant fashion. The British sloop *Finch*, as she tried to close, was put out of action by the accurate fire of the *Ticonderoga* and drifted out of the fight, grounding on the Crab Island shoal. The gunboats, however, massed to make a most determined attack on the American

schooner. Several times they were within a few feet of the *Ticonderoga's* side, but her commander, Lieutenant Stephen Cassin, drove them off with volleys of grapeshot.

After two hours of fighting, the starboard battery of the *Saratoga* was entirely out of action. Defeat stared the Commodore in the face, yet he refused to recognize it. His careful provision for the present contingency was now to prove the deciding factor of the battle. The stern anchor on the *Saratoga* was let go, the bow cable cut, and the ship "wound" or warped around by hauling on the cable leading to the kedge anchor off the starboard quarter, thus bringing a fresh broadside to bear on the *Confiance*.

The *Confiance*, in turn, was fast becoming a wreck. Commodore Downie had been killed early in the battle. A shot from the *Saratoga* struck a long 24 gun on the *Confiance* on the muzzle, dismounting the gun and killing Captain Downie, who was standing directly behind it. This gun with a large dent in the muzzle is in the museum of the United States Naval Academy at Annapolis. The battery on the engaged side was mostly out of action, half her crew killed or wounded. "Our masts yards and sails were so shattered that one looked like so many bunches of matches—the other like a bundle of rags," wrote a British midshipman who served on board the *Confiance*. A last desperate attempt was made to imitate Macdonough's maneuver and wind the ship. It failed; the *Confiance* hauled down her flag.

The *Linnet* with her masts and yards so shattered and disabled that she had no chance to escape by making sail, was obliged in turn to strike her colors. The battle was over; a complete and brilliant victory.

Of the operations of the powerful British army there is little to record. When the British fleet was observed rounding Cumberland Head, Sir George Prevost ordered one of his brigades and part of another to force the crossings of the Saranac River under cover of the fire from his artillery. Attempts were made at two bridges in the village and a third at a ford a few miles upstream. At both bridges the attacks failed. At the ford, however, a few companies got across the stream and drove off the American defenders, consisting of the Essex militia and a few Vermont Volunteers, who retired a mile and a half from the river and poured upon the enemy a heavy fire from behind every tree, until a gun was brought up to their support, when the enemy began a hasty retreat. The Vermont Volunteers fell on the enemy's flank and took many prisoners. Then came the news of the surrender of the British fleet. One company of regulars lost its

way and was rounded up and captured by New York and Vermont militia.

In view of the great superiority of his army both in quantity and quality, it is surprising that Sir George Prevost did not press his attack with greater vigor.

"At dusk," reports General Macomb to the Secretary of War, "the enemy withdrew his artillery from the batteries and raised the siege and at 9, under cover of night, sent off in a great hurry, all the baggage he could find transport for and all his artillery. At 2 the next morning the army precipitately retreated, leaving the sick and wounded to our generosity. Vast quantities of provisions were left behind and destroyed, also an innumerable quantity of cannon balls, ammunition, etc. A great deal has been found concealed in the ponds and creeks and buried in the ground. Such was the precipitateness of his retreat that he arrived at Chazy—a distance of 8 miles—before we discovered he had gone." In the Plattsburg battle the British lost 2000 men, the Americans less than 150.

The failure of the British army to cooperate with the Royal Navy aroused bitter feeling between the two branches of service.

"It appears to me," writes Sir James Lucal Yeo, Commander of the Royal Navy in Canada, "and I have good reason to believe that Captain Downie was urged and his ship hurried into action before she was in a fit state to meet the enemy. I am also of opinion that there was not the least necessity for our squadron giving the enemy such decided advantage by going into their bay to engage them—had our troops taken their batteries first, it would have obliged the enemy's squadron to quit the bay and give ours a fair chance." A year later, at a court-martial in England in connection with the defeat of the British squadron on Lake Champlain, it was held that the capture of the British fleet was principally caused by the British squadron having been urged into battle previous to its being in a proper state to meet the enemy and by the promised cooperation of the army not being carried into effect. Sir George Prevost sailed at once for England to clear his name. Unfortunately he died before his case was called for trial.

"Sir," writes Commodore Macdonough to the Secretary of War, "The Almighty has been pleased to grant us a signal victory on Lake Champlain, in the capture of one frigate, one brig, and two sloops of war of the enemy." All very modest and very true; but if you spend weary months of strain, anxiety and hard work in building a fleet from the trees of the forest, take that fleet to the *one* place where your

enemy is *forced* to fight at a disadvantage and when all that is done, *fight* your battle with the indomitable courage of Nelson himself, then you have gone a long way indeed toward earning the approval of the Almighty.

A month after the battle, conversations were held between British and American envoys relative to the conclusion of a treaty of peace between the two countries. Great Britain chose to adopt the state of possession—that is, the amount of enemy territory seized during the war—as a basis of negotiation. Now came the news of Macdonough's great victory on Lake Champlain and the American triumph at Baltimore. The British Cabinet now communicated with Lord Wellington and asked him to go to Canada as commander-in-chief. Wellington wrote in reply that he would go, if ordered, but did not look forward to success. The great want in Canada, said England's hero, was neither troops nor a general, but a naval superiority on the lakes and in his opinion the operations of the British armies in Canada did not justify a demand for territory. England chose as a basis the status *quo ante bellum*, and a treaty of peace was signed at Ghent the day before Christmas, 1814.

The news of Macdonough's brilliant victory was heralded far and wide; his seamanship, judgment and unconquerable courage received their just due. Theodore Roosevelt has truly said: "Down to the time of the Civil War he is the greatest figure in our naval history. A thoroughly religious man, he was as generous and humane as he was skillful and brave; one of the greatest of our sea captains, he has left a stainless name behind him."

That Macdonough was generous and humane is evidenced by one thing he did shortly after the battle. "Sir," he writes his late adversary, Captain Pring of the *Linnet*, "As Providence has given into my command the squadron on Lake Champlain of which you were (after the fall of Captain Downie) the commanding officer, I beg you will, after the able conflict you have sustained and evidence of determined valor you evinced on board His Britannic Majesty's brig *Linnet* until the necessity of her surrender, accept of your enclosed parole not to serve against the United States, or their dependencies, until regularly exchanged." All of which is a rather graceful way of telling a man that he is a prisoner of war.

The people were not slow to recognize the qualities and character of the Commodore who had won the decisive battle of the war. The country rang with his praises. On November 30, 1814, Macdonough was commissioned Captain—then the highest ranking of the Navy,

to take effect from September 11, the day of the battle. His services were of the very highest value to his country. Defeat of his squadron would have brought about, beyond doubt, the absorption of northern New York and Vermont into the Canadian Dominion. Both Vermont and New York gave him grants of land: New York 1,000 acres, Vermont 200. The lake villages were not unappreciative: Burlington gave the Commodore a public dinner, and the account of this affair in the old files of the *Burlington Sentinel* makes pleasant reading today: "On Monday, September 26th," records the truly inspired reporter, "the roar of artillery announced the arrival of the Hero of Champlain with the gallant officers of his squadron and General Macomb and his suite. They were greeted at their landing from the steamboat with loud and reiterated cheers—an elaborate dinner was served attended by hundreds of guests. The following toasts were drunk, accompanied by heavy peals of artillery, cheers and appropriate music from the bands:

The Government of the United States:

May the head winds of party spirit no longer prevent them from laying their course directly for the port of public prosperity. [*We could drink this one with enthusiasm today.* W.R.F.]

Sir George Prevost's Invasion:

The Duke of York with 50,000 men marched up the hill and then marched down again. [*A fairly accurate description of the late campaign on land.* W.R.F.)

Plattsburg also gave the Commodore a banquet. Again the distinguished officers of the Army and Navy were present; and again there were great enthusiasm and many speeches with probably much old New England rum on hand. At the end when the Commodore was called on for a toast, a tall, dignified officer in the full dress of his rank rose to his feet. His hair and complexion were light; his countenance refined and scholarly; his eyes penetrating, but kindly; his high forehead and strong chin indicating firmness of character. He stood there, grave and unsmiling, until the applause died down; then he raised his glass. "I give you a toast," he said, "to the memory of Commodore Downie, our brave enemy," and sat down. I think that not even Cicero himself, before the Senators of Rome, could have uttered a more touching or more generous tribute.

As the years went on, Thomas Macdonough continued his faithful devotion to the service of his country. In 1818, in command of the frigate *Guerrière*, he conveyed the new American Minister to his post in Russia. In 1820, he was given command of the U. S. Cruiser

Ohio, a huge vessel of 74 guns. In 1824, he was again placed in command of the *Constitution* and sailed on his last voyage to the Mediterranean, owing to ill health, probably caused by exposure and hardship in the Lake Champlain cămpaign. Commodore Macdonough was relieved of the command of the *Constitution* with permission to return to the United States. He died at sea on the homeward voyage and was buried at Middletown, Conn., in the old cemetery overlooking the Connecticut River.

It is well that this valiant and honored dust should lie near the great river, flowing forever to the sea—so near that it may feel the faint beat of that vast ocean on whose waters a modest, God-fearing officer of our Navy, who was such a strange mixture of gentleness and flaming courage, gave up gladly the flower of his years that the flag of our country might be known and respected throughout the waters of the world by all those who go down to the sea in ships.

VERMONT TOWN NAMES AND THEIR DERIVATIONS

By Thesba N. Johnston

We are beginning with Mrs. Johnston's aid a determined assault on the perpetual question, "How did such and such a town get its name?" Before we are done, we hope to assemble as accurate a list as is humanly possible, tracing the name to sound historical references where they exist and where they fail using the traditional explanations. Knowing Vermont as we do, we are aware that in some towns lasting feuds have grown up around diverse explanations, and in the search for the truth, we intend to become feudists ourselves. Such being the case, we will welcome any information regarding the towns listed without data and the towns with. The intermediate or final results will be printed in brochure form for handy reference purposes. The references are keyed at the end of the article, and other sources indicated. A town name, like the wrong end of a telescope, often gives a dim view of the past, but it remains, nevertheless, as a link in the long chain of years. Editor.

1 ADDISON	In honor of Joseph Addison, the English writer.
2 ALBANY	First settlers came from New York, and named it for Albany, New York.
3 ALBURG	"After Major General Ira Allen," a corruption of Allensburgh.
4 ANDOVER	?
5 ARLINGTON	?
6 ATHENS	?
7 BAKERSFIELD	Named in 1798 after Joseph Baker, the first settler. [(1) : vol. 2, p. 103]
8 BALTIMORE	?
9 BARNARD	Chartered to Francis Bernard, Royal Governor of New York 1758–60, and Royal Governor of Massachusetts 1760–1764. [(2) : vol. 1, p. 184]
10 BARNET	Settled by immigrants from Scotland (as was Ryegate). Supposed to have been

named after Barnet, England or Scotland. [(3): p. 57]

11 BARRE — Chartered Wildersburgh. Town meeting called to choose name. Captain Joseph Thomson of Holden, Mass., favored the name of Holden. Jonathan Sherman, resident of Barre, Mass., wanted Barre. They fought in Calvin Smith's barn. Sherman won, and exclaimed: "There, by ———, now Barre is the name!" [(4): pp. 108, 109]

12 BARTON — Granted to General William Barton and associates October 20, 1781. [(1): vol. 3, p. 71]

13 BELVIDERE — ?

14 BENNINGTON — Taken from the Christian name of Benning Wentworth, Governor of New Hampshire, on January 3, 1749. [(1): vol. 1, p. 144]

15 BENSON — It is said the name was given by James Meacham on May 5, 1780, to the town in honor of a Revolutionary officer by the name of Benson, an eminent lawyer, one of the most prominent public men of the State of N.Y. in the Revolutionary area and one of the commissioners who established the boundary line between Vermont and New York [(1): vol. 3, p. 406]

16 BERKSHIRE — Assumed to be named for Berkshire, England. [*G. L. Harvey, Town Clerk, Berkshire*]

17 BERLIN — ?

18 BETHEL — Dudley Chase with a surveying party camped within the township, slept on the ground with a stone for a pillow. In the morning, like Jacob in the Bible, he named the place "Bethel" and made the wish that the stone upon which he pillowed his head might one day form the foundation of a church. In 1824, all the

		stones in the vicinity were gathered up and used in the foundation of the Baptist church [(5): p. 91.]
19	BLOOMFIELD	?
20	BOLTON	?
21	BRADFORD	Named after Bradford, Massachusetts. [(1): vol. 2, p. 812]
22	BRAINTREE	Many of the first settlers were residents of Braintree, Massachusetts. [(1): vol. 2, p. 845]
23	BRANDON	Named in honor of the Earl of Brandon; or, another source says, it was derived from 'Burnt Town' after an Indian attack in 1777, when the houses were burned. [(6): p. 287]
24	BRATTLEBORO	After Colonel Brattle of Massachusetts, one of the original proprietors.
25	BRIDGEWATER	?
26	BRIDPORT	?
27	BRIGHTON	Changed from Random (it being a "random purchase from an agent in Providence, R.I., sent to Brighton by the inhabitants of the town") Nov. 3, 1832 [(1): vol. 1, p. 953]
28	BRISTOL	Believed to have been taken from Bristol, Conn., as many early settlers were from Connecticut. [(7): p. 7]
29	BROOKFIELD	"The number of rills or brooks is so great as to give plausibility to the tradition that from this circumstance originated the name of the town." [(1): vol. 2, p. 854]
30	BROOKLINE	From Grassy Brook which runs north to south, the length of the town, emptying into the West River.
31	BROWNINGTON	Chartered to Timothy and Daniel Brown, and associates.
32	BRUNSWICK	Named for the Earl or Duke of Brunswick, England. [*Annie R. Taylor, Town Clerk of Brunswick, Vt.*]
33	BURKE	?
34	BURLINGTON	Ten men by the name of Burling were

among the grantees from Westchester County, New York. "Burlings were extensive land holders in the several towns chartered at the same time with Burlington."

35 CABOT — Named by "Mr. Lyman Hitchcock, one of the grantees, in honor of his intended bride, Miss Cabot, of Connecticut, a descendant of Sebastian Cabot." [(8), p. 201]

36 CALAIS — Named by Colonel Jacob Davis, after Calais, France. [(1): vol. 4, p. 130]

37 CAMBRIDGE — ?

38 CANAAN — Probably for Canaan, Conn.

39 CASTLETON — Uncertain. Hemenway says, "The most probable supposition seems to be that it was called after a man by the name of Castle, of whom Col. Bird purchased 95 original shares, showing that he was early a large proprietor." "It has been ascertained that the name was derived from an English locality called Cavendish." [(1): vol. 3, p. 501 and (9): p. 516]

40 CAVENDISH — ?

41 CHARLESTON — Named for King Charles II, of whom it was written "He never said a foolish thing, and never did a wise one."

42 CHARLOTTE — ?

43 CHELSEA — Probably named for Chelsea, England.

44 CHESTER — ?

45 CHITTENDEN — After Thomas Chittenden, first Governor of Vermont. [(1): vol. 3, p. 548]

46 CLARENDON — ?

47 COLCHESTER — ?

48 CONCORD — Unknown. Possibly after Concord, Mass., where the "rude bridge arched the flood."

49 CORINTH — "History or tradition does not inform us what originated its name." [(1): vol. 2, p. 873.]

50 CORNWALL — For Cornwall, Connecticut.

51 COVENTRY	Named by Major Elias Buel in honor of his birthplace, Coventry, Connecticut. [(1): vol. 3, p. 756]
52 CRAFTSBURY	"Named for grantee, Ebenezer Crafts." [(6): p. 225]
53 DANBY	After Danby, England. [*William D. Nichols, Town Clerk of Danby, Vt.*]
54 DANVILLE	Named in honor of the distinguished French Admiral, D'Anville. [(6): p. 335]
55 DERBY	Named by settlers from Derby, England.
56 DORSET	?
57 DOVER	?
58 DUMMERSTON	In honor of "Lt. Gov. William Dummer of Massachusetts" who directed the building of Fort Dummer. [(2): vol. 1, p. 164]
59 DUXBURY	"Probably named after Duxbury, Mass., which was a duplicate of Duxbury, England. In old Saxon 'Bury' signifies a fortification, or fortified place, and Dux, or duke, meaning a chieftain or leader. Hence Duke's fort, or Duxbury." [(9): p. 246]
60 EAST HAVEN	?
61 EAST MONTPELIER	Divided from Montpelier, the eastern section. Montpelier named from Montpelier, France.
62 EDEN	?
63 ELMORE	"Aug. 21, 1781, it was chartered to Col. Samuel Elmore and several associates. From Colonel Elmore the town derives its name." [(1): vol. 2, p. 626]
64 ENOSBURG	Granted to Roger Enos by Governor Chittenden March 12, 1780. [(1): vol. 2, p. 132]
65 ESSEX	After some earl or baronet of England with whom the grantees were familiar or associated.
66 FAIRFAX	Settlers named it for their home town in Fairfax, England.

67 FAIRFIELD — After Fairfield, Conn.

68 FAIR HAVEN — It is not known from what source the town was called by this name. [(1): vol. 3, p. 672]

69 FAIRLEE — A British soldier remarked as he viewed the site of this town: "That is a fair lea." Lea in England means level land.

70 FAYSTON — Named for Joseph Fay, who was in 1792 Secretary of State.

71 FERRISBURG — Named after original grantees by the name of Benjamin Ferris and Reed Ferris. [(1): vol. 1, p. 32]

72 FLETCHER — ?

73 FRANKLIN — ?

74 GEORGIA — ?

75 GLASTONBURY — ?

76 GLOVER — From General John Glover, who came from Marblehead, Mass. "The land now embraced in the town was granted to him by Congress as a reward for his distinguished military services." [(1): vol. 3, p. 195]

77 GOSHEN — Named for the Bible Goshen, the home of the children of Israel while in Egypt. So named by a Congregational minister by the name of Aaron Hutchinson.

78 GRAFTON — In honor of the Duke of Grafton, son of Charles II and Barbara Villiers, Countess of Castlemaine.

79 GRANBY — "Tradition says" it was named "in honor of Lord or Earl Granby" of England. [(1): vol. 1, p. 987]

80 GRAND ISLE — When the French dominated the area, both what are now North and South Hero, as well as this island, were referred to as "la grande isle." The largest island retained this name. [(1): vol. 2, p. 519]

81 GRANVILLE — "Originally called Kingston from King, a name common among proprietors and first settlers . . . owing to some local

prejudices, the name was changed November 6, 1834." [(1): vol. 1, p. 39]

82 GREENSBORO — In honor of one of the original proprietors by the name of Green. [(1): vol. 3, p. 210]

83 GROTON — Named after Groton, Mass., according to tradition. There is no authentic record. [(1): vol. 4, p. 1145.]

84 GUILDHALL — It is not known by whom this town was named, but it may have been named for a town in England near London. *Vermont, a Guide to the Green Mountain State*, p. 209, says there is no other town in the world by this name. [(10): p. 449.]

85 GUILFORD — It is believed to have been named from Guilford, Conn., which was named from Guilford, England. [*Nora J. Evans, Assistant Town Clerk of Guilford, Vt.*]

86 HALIFAX — Named by Governor Benning Wentworth for his friend, the Earl of Halifax.

87 HANCOCK — ?

88 HARDWICK — Named after Hardwick, Mass., home of the first settlers of the town. [(6): p. 224]

89 HARTFORD — The original grantees resided in Connecticut, of which Hartford was the capital.

90 HARTLAND — Chartered as Hertford, the name was changed to Hartland by act of the Legislature in 1782 to avoid confusion with Hartford. [(11): p. 359 and (12), p. 137]

91 HIGHGATE — Believed to be named after the town of Highgate, England. [*C. M. Tatro, Town Clerk of Highgate, Vt.*]

92 HINESBURG — Chartered June 24, 1762 to Abel Hine and associates. "Abel Hine acted for many years as proprietors' clerk, and for him the town was named." [(1): vol. 1, pp. 792, 793]

93 HOLLAND — ?

94	HUBBARDTON	Chartered by the Governor of New Hampshire to Thomas Hubbard, a large proprietor in the town. [(2): vol. 1, p. 247]
95	HUNTINGTON	Named in honor of Jonathan Hunt.
96	HYDE PARK	Named for Captain Jedediah Hyde. [(1): vol. 2, p. 636]
97	IRA	Undoubtedly for Ira Allen, but no record bears it out.
98	IRASBURG	Granted to Ira Allen, the principal proprietor—Ira's burg. [(1): vol. 3, p. 239 and (6), p. 227]
99	ISLE LA MOTTE	"From a French officer La-Mothe," or La-Mott. [(1), vol. 2, p. 554]
100	JAMAICA	From a Spanish word "Haymaca" meaning "Isle of Springs," "Island of Fountains," or "well watered." [*Ray G. Wilder, Town Clerk of Jamaica, Vt.*]
101	JAY	Granted to Judge John Jay, statesman of New York and Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of the U.S. [(1): vol. 3, p. 265]
102	JERICHO	Named for the Bible Jericho by Aaron Hutchinson, Congregational minister.
103	JOHNSON	First named by a Mr. Brown as Brownville. In the fall of 1780, he and his family were taken prisoner by the Indians to Canada. Before his return, another grant was made of the same territory to Samuel William Johnson and associates, under date of February 27, 1782. [(1): vol. 2, pp. 669, 670]
104	KIRBY	?
105	LANDGROVE	?
106	LEICESTER	?
107	LEMINGTON	For Lemington, England.
108	LINCOLN	?
109	LONDONDERRY	Settlement commenced about 1774 by James Rogers, S. Thompson and James Patterson from Londonderry, N. H.
110	LOWELL	?

111 LUDLOW	Named for a family of settlers by the name of Ludlow.
112 LUNENBURG	Early settlers of the neighboring town of Guildhall came from Lunenburg, Mass. [(2): vol. 1, p. 234]
113 LYNDON	Chartered in 1780. "The name Lyndon was given in honor of the oldest son of the first grantee, Dr. Arnold, whose name was Josias Lyndon." [(10): p. 230]
114 MAIDSTONE	Probably from Maidstone, England.
115 MANCHESTER	?
116 MARLBORO	Named by Governor Wentworth for his friend, the Duke of Marlborough. [(6): p. 366]
117 MARSHFIELD	Purchased of the Indians by Captain Isaac Marsh of Stockbridge, Mass., for £140. The deed was signed by 18 Indians with names such as David Nesowukausdahanauk and Abraham Maurnmumthickhur. [(8): p. 285]
118 MENDON	?
119 MIDDLEBURY	"John Evarts, Esq., having three towns to survey, named the one on the south, Salisbury, the one on the north, New Haven, and the third, from its *middle* position, Middlebury." [(1): vol. 1, p. 50]
120 MIDDLESEX	?
121 MIDDLETOWN SPRINGS	Formed by taking about 3,000 acres from Tinmouth, about 6,000 acres from Wells, about 2,000 acres from Ira and about 2,000 acres from Poultney. It was given its name on account of the manner in which it was formed, being in the middle of the four towns. [(1): vol. 3, p. 794]
122 MILTON	After the English poet, John Milton. [(13): p. 636]
123 MONKTON	?
124 MONTGOMERY	?

125 MONTPELIER — "This name was bestowed by Colonel Jacob Davis, the first permanent settler and a leading proprietor . . . and probably as a namesake of Montpelier in France." The name was derived as follows: *mont* (hill or mountain) *peller* (bare or shorn). There are some rocky elevations at the rear of the present state house and at one time few trees. [(8): p. 320 and (6): p. 117]

126 MORETOWN — ?

127 MORGAN — From one of the original proprietors, John Morgan, Esq., of Hartford, Conn. [(1): vol. 3, p. 284]

128 MORRISTOWN — From Moses Morse, the chief grantee, being a modification of "Morsetown." [(1): vol. 2, p. 681]

129 MT. HOLLY — ?

130 MT. TABOR — Gideon Tabor was the first moderator, lister, representative and the first person to conduct a school in the town. [(1): vol. 3, pp. 866, 867]

131 NEWARK — ?

132 NEWBURY — Named for Newbury, England, by first settlers in honor of their pastor, Rev. Thomas Parker, who preached there.

133 NEWFANE — Charter granted in 1753 by Benning Wentworth to Abraham Sawyer and others including Thomas Fane. In 1761 the former charter was returned to Governor Wentworth and a new one designating the name as New Fane. Thomas Fane was a follower of Sir Thomas Wyatt, who in 1553 headed the movement to place Lady Jane Grey on the throne of England instead of Queen Mary. [(6): p. 187]

134 NEW HAVEN — Named by John Everts of Salisbury, Conn., after New Haven, Conn. [(1): vol. 1, p. 69]

135 NEWPORT — ?

136 NORTHFIELD ?

137 NORTH HERO Named with South Hero, after the two heroes, Col. Ira and Gen. Ethan Allen. [(1): vol. 2, p. 519]

138 NORTON In honor of Jedediah Norton, of Meriden, Conn.

139 NORWICH After Norwich, England. [*B. M. Olds, Town Clerk of Norwich, Vt.*]

140 ORANGE ?

141 ORWELL The town of Orwell is believed to be so named in honor of Lord Orwell, one of the Lords to whom was entrusted the supervision and management of the British Colonies in America. [*Orwell Citizen*, July 26, 1901]

142 PANTON "Probably named in honor of a British nobleman, Lord Panton." [(1): vol. 1, p. 78]

143 PAWLET Evidently of French origin (Paulette). [(1): vol. 3, p. 870]

144 PEACHAM Origin unknown. May have been named by Governor Wentworth for a heroine of Gay's *Beggar's Opera*, Polly Peachum. Possibly after Henry Peacham, author of "The Compleat Gentleman," or for Pecham, Kent, England. [(14), p. 14]

145 PERU Previous to 1804 this town was called Bromley. The town's reputation abroad was "poverty-stricken," which kept people from coming there to settle. It was thought if the name were changed to Peru, which had a connotation of South American wealth, a different impression would be created. The population increased some after the change.

146 PITTSFIELD Named for the Massachusetts town by the same name from which many of the first settlers emigrated, by Charles Goodrich. [(1): vol. 3, p. 935]

147 PITTSFORD In this town was one of the best fording

places over Otter Creek. Named in honor of William Pitt, then prime minister of England and friend of the Colonies. [(1): vol. 3, p. 939]

148 PLAINFIELD — Named by Charles Goodrich after his home town, Plainfield, Mass.

149 PLYMOUTH — Settlers came from Plymouth, Mass., named for Plymouth, England.Plymouth, England, was named for the Earl of Plymouth, son of Charles II and Catherine Peg.

150 POMFRET — Settlement commenced in the spring, March of 1770 by Bartholomew Durkee from Pomfret, Conn. [(2): vol. 1, p. 237]

151 POULTNEY — Probably named for an English Lord of that name, who was a friend of Governor Benning Wentworth. [(6): p. 320]

152 POWNAL — Named in honor of Thomas Pownall, Royal Governor of Massachusetts and Carolina, friend of Benjamin Franklin and opposer of Colonial taxation. [(2): vol. 1, p. 183]

153 PROCTOR — Named for its leading citizen, Redfield Proctor. [(6): p. 289]

154 PUTNEY — ?

155 RANDOLPH — Named for the Virginia statesman, Edmund Randolph.

156 READING — ?

157 READSBORO — Chartered as Readsborough; granted to John Reed, by Lt. Governor Colton of New York. [*Town Clerk of Readsboro, Vt.*]

158 RICHFORD — ?

159 RICHMOND — Named after the Duke of Richmond, son of King Charles II and Louise de Keroualle, Duchess of Portsmouth.

160 RIPTON — Parts of Middlebury and Salisbury were annexed to make this town; a poem says it was formed by "ripping" other towns.

Up on the mountain lies a town, and Ripton was its name!

It is not of so great renown as those upon the plain!
It has its present size obtained by ripping other towns;
Ten thousand acres it has gained, but not so many Crowns!
[(1): vol. 1, p. 87]

161 ROCHESTER ?

162 ROCKINGHAM Name chosen by Governor Wentworth in honor of the Marquis of Rockingham, Charles Watson Wentworth, who was a relative of the governor. Born 1730, died 1782.

163 ROXBURY ?

164 ROYALTON ?

165 RUPERT Probably named for Prince Rupert of England, grandson of James I and nephew of the unfortunate Charles I. [(2): vol. 1, p. 230]

166 RUTLAND Named for Rutland, Mass., by the first mentioned grantee, John Murray, an Irishman and a citizen of Rutland, Mass. [*V. A. Sevigny, Town Clerk, W. Rutland, Vt.*]

167 RYEGATE Settled by Scottish people formerly of Rye, N. H., the latter being named from Rye, Scotland. Another version is that the town was named after the town of Reigate, England, 20 miles from London. [(10): p. 283 and (15), p. 10]

168 ST. ALBANS Probably named after St. Albans, England, by Levi Allen, or in honor of the Duke of St. Albans, son of Charles II and the noted actress Nell Gwyn.

169 ST. GEORGE In honor of the King of England (1762).

170 ST. JOHNSBURY In honor of St. John de Crevecoeur. French consul at New York. [(1): vol, 1, p. 388]

171 SALISBURY "Named after Salisbury, Connecticut" by John Evarts, of Salisbury, Conn. [(1): vol. 1, p. 88]

172 SANDGATE — Named for Sandgate, England. [*C. W. Bentley, Town Clerk, Sandgate, Vt.*]

173 SEARSBURG — ?

174 SHAFTSBURY — From a Baptist Association in that section of the state called the "Shafts Association."

175 SHARON — ?

176 SHEFFIELD — Named for Sheffield, England. [(6): p. 239]

177 SHELBURNE — "In honor of the Earl of Shelburne," celebrated nobleman of the British Parliament. He opposed the claims of the government of New York to the territory now within the boundaries of Vermont. [(1): vol. 1, p. 877]

178 SHELDON — Conveyed to George B., Samuel, Elisha, Jr. and Colonel Elisha Sheldon. [(1): vol. 2, p. 375]

179 SHERBURNE — ?

180 SHOREHAM — Assumed to be named for Shoreham, England. [*Norma F. Waite, Town Clerk, Shoreham, Vt.*]

181 SHREWSBURY — For Shrewsbury, England. [*Lois P. Russell, Town Clerk, Shrewsbury, Vt.*]

182 SOMERSET — Named for Somerset, England. [*Roy H. Farrington, Supervisor of Somerset, Vt.*]

183 SOUTH BURLINGTON — Refer to Burlington, No. 34.

184 SOUTH HERO — Refer to North Hero, No. 137. [(1): vol. 2, p. 519]

185 SPRINGFIELD — Named for Springfield, Mass. [(11): p. 406]

186 STAMFORD — ?

187 STANNARD — Until 1867 called Goshen's Gore. Many soldiers from the town fought in the Civil War under General Stannard, who turned the tide at the Battle of Gettysburg. [(10): p. 306]

188 STARKSBORO — Named for General John Stark, one of the original grantees.

189 STOCKBRIDGE — From the fact that there were so many bridges. [*Eunice E. Larabee, Town Clerk, Stockbridge, Vt.*]

190	STOWE	Named after a town in England, originally spelled Stow.
191	STRAFFORD	Named by residents for Strafford, England. [*L. Irene Chandler, Town Clerk, Strafford, Vt.*]
192	STRATTON	?
193	SUDBURY	?
194	SUNDERLAND	Understood to be named for Sunderland, England, near Newcastle. [*Harriet R. Stone, Town Clerk, Sunderland, Vt.*]
195	SUTTON	Granted to Col. Jonathan Arnold in February, 1782, and originally called Billymead; after Arnold's son, Billy. The name was later changed in 1812, when Billy Arnold turned out to be a drunken bully who abused his neighbors and generally upset the town. [(10): p. 345]
196	SWANTON	Named for Captain William Swanton, an officer in the British service during the French and Indian War. [(1): vol. 4, p. 991]
197	THETFORD	?
198	TINMOUTH	Named for Teignmouth, England (Devonshire county on the English Channel).
199	TOPSHAM	From Topsham, Maine, which in turn was named from Topsham, England.
200	TOWNSHEND	Named by Governor Benning Wentworth for his friend, Charles Townshend, a distinguished member of the ministry at whose pleasure, with others, Governor Wentworth held his office.
201	TROY	?
202	TUNBRIDGE	Named for Tunbridge Wells, England.
203	UNDERHILL	"Named after two brothers who held shares under the original charter," Abraham and Benjamin Underhill. [(1): vol. 1, p. 886]
204	VERGENNES	Named after and in honor of Count de Vergennes, French foreign minister of foreign affairs. [(6): p. 283]

205 VERNON — In 1802 the town instructed Jonathan Hunt, town representative, to name the town Huntstown, but at his wife's suggestion, it was named Vernon. It is the only town in the state named by a woman.

206 VERSHIRE — Located near line of division between New Hampshire and Vermont—Ver from Vermont; shire from New Hampshire [*Ethel C. Harding, Town Clerk, Vershire, Vt.*]

207 VICTORY — Possibly in honor of the Revolutionary victory over England.

208 WAITSFIELD — "Received its name from General Benjamin Wait, who founded the settlement in 1789." Wait was a General in the Revolution under General Washington. [(6): p. 250]

209 WALDEN — Named for Major Walden, who commanded the blockhouse in this town. [(6): p. 342.]

210 WALLINGFORD — A number of the early settlers came from Wallingford, Conn. [(1): vol. 3, p. 1161]

211 WALTHAM — "Named by Phineas Brown," the first town moderator," after his native town in Massachusetts. [(1): vol. 1, p. 108]

212 WARDSBORO — Chartered to William Ward of Newfane, November 7, 1780.

213 WARREN — For Joseph Warren, hero of Bunker Hill.

214 WASHINGTON — ?

215 WATERBURY — From Waterbury, Conn. "Many of the proprietors lived in Waterbury, Connecticut and New Jersey." [(8): p. 487]

216 WATERFORD — In 1796 there were two practicable fords in the town across the Connecticut River. [(10): p. 368]

217 WATERVILLE — Probably because of the many good mill privileges on a branch of the Lamoille River. [(1): vol. 2, pp. 772, 773.]

218 WEATHERSFIELD — From the town in Connecticut spelled Wethersfield. [(11), p. 697]

219 WELLS — In 1869 an historian stated "It is not known from whence the name of the town originated or to whom belonged the honor of naming it." [(1): vol. 3, p. 1189]

220 WEST FAIRLEE — As a result of a disagreement, the western part of the town became separate.

221 WESTFIELD — ?

222 WESTFORD — ?

223 WEST HAVEN — Once a part of Fair Haven; when divided became West Haven.

224 WESTMINSTER — Named for the British Earl of Westminster. [*Mary W. Fullam, Town Clerk, Westminster, Vt.*]

225 WESTMORE — Originally granted as Westford, but changed in 1787 to Westmore to avoid confusion with the other Westford. [(1): vol. 3, p. 367]

226 WESTON — ?

227 WEST RUTLAND — Refer to No. 166.

228 WEST WINDSOR — Was formerly a part of Windsor. The towns were divided in 1849. [*Ray L. Blanchard, Town Clerk, W. Windsor, Vt.*]

229 WEYBRIDGE — Obtained its name from five bridges owned by the town within the town: 3 across Lemon Fair, 2 across Otter Creek; ½ interest in 2 more; 1/17 in another. [*O. H. Wright, Town Clerk, Weybridge, Vt.*]

230 WHEELOCK — Named after the president of Dartmouth College, Rev. John Wheelock. [(1): vol. 1, p. 432]

231 WHITING — Named in honor of Colonel John Whiting of Wrentham, Mass., one of the original proprietors. [(1): vol. 1, p. 115]

232 WHITINGHAM — Named after Colonel Nathan Whiting, British soldier rewarded for his fidelity in the King's service, in March 1770. [(6): p. 367]

233 WILLIAMSTOWN — Some contend the town received its name from Judah Williams, one of the

proprietors. It is more probable that it was given by the proprietors, of whom a majority were residents of Williamstown, Mass. [*P. J. Jeffords, Town Clerk, Williamstown, Vt.*]

234 WILLISTON — Named "in honor of Samuel Willis, one of the grantees." [(1): vol. 1, p. 900]

235 WILMINGTON — Named by Governor Benning Wentworth for his friend, the Earl of Wilmington.

236 WINDHAM — Named for Windham, N. H. [(6): p. 331]

237 WINDSOR — Early settlers came from Windsor, Conn., which in turn, was named for Windsor, England. [*Katherine E. Conlin, Town Clerk, Windsor, Vt.*]

238 WINHALL — "Derived its name from two proprietors, a Mr. Winn and a Mr. Hall." [(1), vol. 1, p. 245]

239 WINOOSKI — From the Indian name meaning "Onion river."

240 WOLCOTT — Given in honor of Major General Oliver Wolcott, one of the original proprietors, and a signer of the Declaration of Independence. [(6): p. 344]

241 WOODBURY — "Chartered August 16, 1781 by the Legislature of Vermont, to Colonel Ebenezer Wood, William Lyman, Esq. and sixty associates." [(8), p. 578]

242 WOODFORD — ?

243 WOODSTOCK — Believed to be named by early settlers for Woodstock, England. [*W. A. Shurtleff, Town Clerk, Woodstock, Vt.*]

244 WORCESTER — ?

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A VERMONT SKETCHBOOK

1. THE CHICKERING STORY *by* TENNIE GASKILL TOUSSAINT

In carrying out our Century Farm Project we have found over 250 Vermont farms, each one of which has been in the possession of one family for a century or more, and we are continuing the search. Mrs. Toussaint's research has uncovered the stories of a number of these farms, and this one is the first sketch in the series. The farms are in the town of Danville in Caledonia County. The population of the town in 1830 was 2631, present population 1312. Editor.

The Chickering Century Farm is located about half a mile east of the old North and South road on one of the spiderweb roads that radiate from North Danville village. This is one of the Century Farms that has come down through the distaff side of the family. The name of the original owner was Pope.

Three sons of Joseph Pope of old Salem or Danvers, Mass., came to Danville sometime before 1789. Probably about 1785 or 1786. The family story has it that the brothers were Eleazer, Joseph and Perley Pope. They bought a large quantity of adjoining lots of land and began their early settlements.

The town of Danville was organized in 1787.

Young Joseph Pope built a log cabin and started clearing the land the first summer on the present Chickering farm. He went back to Salem in the fall and the next spring brought his wife, Susan (Marsh), and their small child back to their new home in the wilderness. Joseph was twenty-two years old, and Susan was eighteen.

The first record of conveyance of land to Joseph Pope in the town of Danville is on June 7, 1789. The first census of Vermont in 1790 tabulates 574 persons. Joseph Pope's family was enumerated as "1 male over 16 years, 1 male under 16 years, 2 females."

At one time there was evidence of there having been two different early cabins on the other side of the present road that goes past the Chickering farm. They both were farther back off the road.

The family likes to tell this story about the time Joseph took a bag of wheat on a hand-sled, on snowshoes, to the Peacham mills, some ten miles away, to be ground into flour.

It was a very cold winter day, and to make matters worse for Susan and the small children, there were rumors of Indians having been seen near by. She did not dare to have any fire for fear the Indians would see the smoke, so she got into bed with the children, and they kept from freezing to death by piling on all the bed-clothes they had, until Joseph came back sometime in the night.

There was quite a settlement of Popes in that locality for a good many years. There is a town cemetery, now on the North and South road, called the "Pope Cemetery," where the three original Pope brothers and many of their descendants are at rest, beside their early pioneer neighbors.

The Popes were supposed to be closely related to Israel Putnam of Revolutionary fame. Various stories and beliefs have been handed down through the family generations as to just how he was related to whom. Careful and extensive research has revealed that the two families were pretty well mixed up in the early days in old Salem. The one verified fact to date is that Israel Putnam's first wife was Hannah Pope, a sister of Joseph Pope, Sr. (father of the three brothers). Therefore, Israel Putnam was an uncle by marriage to the three Popes who came to Danville to live. Anyway, Joseph Pope of Danville named one of his sons, Israel Putnam Pope, and he was always nicknamed "Put" Pope.

Joseph built the present farmhouse, probably in 1811, as there was a brick in the old fireplace with that date on it when it was torn out years later.

In later years he divided the farm and gave part of it to his son "Put" Pope, and built him a house beside his, and a barn across the road beside his own. The two houses were only a few rods apart with a cidermill and toolshed between. The old cidermill had a long sweep operated by a horse, that went around half way and back again, and crushed the apples instead of grinding them.

Water for the two families was right handy. It came from a back spring through pump-logs to a tub between the two houses, and was used by generations of families in both houses for many years.

Another son, John Franklin Pope, fell heir to the home farm. He is said to have had a beautiful tenor voice, and was known as the "man with the golden voice."

It is evident that he taught singing-school, as a news item of the winter of 1860 reveals the fact that he held a singing-school in the old Academy on the hill at Peacham that winter. He married and had a family and died at the age of forty-two.

Of his children, John went off to the Civil War and was captured by the rebels and kept in the notorious Andersonville prison. When he was released, he was so hungry that he ate too much food and died as a result.

Charles B. went to Chicago and went into the Board of Trade there and became a wealthy financier. His widow gave the beautiful little Public Library at Danville Green in his memory in 1890.

Walter, the youngest boy, also went to Chicago and became a druggist.

George went to British Columbia to mine for gold when a young man. He lived many years with the Indians there. He panned out gold to the amount of $10,000 and brought it back to the home farm near North Danville. It is told that he kept the gold dust up in the attic in two small buckskin saddle-bags for a year or more. Then he married a North Danville girl and took her to Chicago, where he invested his gold dust in a new real-estate development.

Mrs. O'Leary's big bonfire of 1871 bordered on his wildland real estate. After the fire when the city began to build again, it headed in another direction, and left George with a lot of worthless land and a couple of empty saddle-bags. They are still up in the Chickering attic, and still empty.

Mary Pope, the only daughter, lived on the home farm and married Austin Finley, who remodeled the house and built a new modern barn to replace the old one which burned. The new barn is at the rear of the house, instead of across the road.

Their daughter, Alice, married Orville Chickering, who was known as a first-class carpenter. They had two sons, A. Merton and A. Carl Chickering.

Dr. A. Merton Chickering is head of the Science Department at Albion College, Michigan. He began his education at St. Johnsbury Academy, went to a Boston "prep" school, took a scientific course at Yale, where he received his B.S.

He taught at Beloit, Wisconsin college, for a number of years. He studied for his Master's degree at the University of Wisconsin, at Madison. He earned his Ph.D. at the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor.

Dr. Chickering makes a special study of spiders. He finds there has been very little study made in regard to them. He has had several books published on spiders, and he has the largest collection of spider specimens in the world, some 50,000. He has spent a year or two in British Guiana and Panama studying and collecting specimens.

A. Carl Chickering is still living on the old place, and his son, Leo, is co-owner of the farm. Under the son's managment in recent years the farm has become more productive. For the past two years he has rented the land, and he and his family are living in Florida, where he is employed as a carpenter.

Carl Chickering's only daughter, Katherine, and two small children are now living with her father while her husband is serving in the U.S. Army. She was a nurse in the Army Nursing Corps during World War II, serving in England, Germany and France. She afterwards served in the Percy Jones General Hospital in Battle Creek, Michigan, and other hospitals. She attained the rank of Captain.

Another son, Rolfe Chickering, was a pilot in the Air Force in World War II. He flew a Thunderbolt over France and Germany, making seventy-five missions. He was a lieutenant, and has been a Reserve until recently, when he was called into action. He is stationed at Fort Ethan Allen near Burlington with his family. He has been made a Captain, and is now flying a Mustang plane on patrol over the northeastern part of Vermont.

Carl Chickering has always been a great lover of the outdoors, and is an experienced hunter and trapper. He loves dogs, and can take the hedge-hog quills out of a dog's mouth quicker than it took the dog to collect them.

If you want music for an entertainment program, or a fiddler for a kitchen-junket, Carl will be there with his fiddle.

2. ADDISON BRANCH JOINS THE GHOST LINES, CONSOLIDATED

by HAROLD L. BAILEY

The day is coming when the awe-inspiring "choo-choo" engine of our boyhood will vanish. The short-haul lines in Vermont are going, and taking with them another phase of Vermont life that had a special appeal, for the conductor, among other items of knowledge, knew every passenger on his route and all of their idiosyncrasies. We look back fondly to such a road on which the trainmen were known to stop the train to raid an apple orchard, and—we saw it with our own eyes—halt the train so that the engineer could "take a shot" at a deer across the mowing. He missed. Editor.

There wasn't much ado about it—the dropping of the old Addison Branch from the Rutland Railroad's system. The usual forms of petition, notice posting and hearings were gone through, approval by the I.C.C. was noted in a few paragraphs in the press, and one more of Vermont's short lines had merged with Ghost Lines, Consolidated, that rapidly growing system ridden only by the imaginings of railroad

fans and, perhaps, of a few old-timers along the lines who liked to hear the locomotive toots even if they had not purchased many tickets of late. The last trip out from Leicester Junction to Larrabee's and back was made May 27, 1951, and in a few weeks raw dirt where the rails had been pulled from the right of way was all that was left to mark the line.

The Addison Branch was the last of its kind in the state to make even a pretense at passenger service—the last, at least, unless we count the Montpelier & Wells River, but this never was really a branch. Two or three others, including the D. & H. branches into Rutland and the lines from Montpelier Jct. to Barre, remain for freight service only.

The passing of many of the short lines have been the occasions of "last run trips" with goodly gatherings of the faithful filling the coaches and a queer mixture of melancholy and holiday spirit. At least, the old lines have had one good day of patronage, albeit it was their last. Not so with the Addison. So far as was reported, no one but the crew rode that last trip. But as it turned out, the next-to-the last trip did partake of a little interest from outside. This was one week previous, May 20th, for, you see, the schedule for some little time had been one mixed train a week out and back from the Junction. A few—just seven, to be exact—with the unaccountable zeal of the lay railroad cult, without knowing just how near the end was, arranged to make the trip. It was the first as well as the last for all of us, and for this writer it completed, with a very few long gone exceptions, a record of travel over all the railroads which have ever been in operation in the state.

Our train was an "accommodation train" in the strict sense of the word. Here is the way the traffic agent at Rutland phrased it to the one of our group who was making arrangements: "It's scheduled to leave at 2 o'clock, but may be a little late down from Burlington. Let's call it we won't leave Leicester Junction before 2:30. If you find you are not going to get to the Junction by then, call up and we'll wait till you do come." If that did not make it an "accommodation" train, try to find one more accommodating.

Though this weekly service had been scheduled in the time-table right along, the station agent at Leicester Junction smiled when I innocently asked if he had tickets to Larrabee's Point. "We used to," he said, when he found I was not trying to be funny. Later, the conductor told us that even in the last of the daily runs there had been practically no passenger traffic.

We were there on time and the train down from Burlington was

only a "little late" as the agent had suggested. It still took a little time to shift off such of the cars as were not to go out on the branch, leaving us three freight cars, "buggy," coach, and locomotive of the 1905 type. There was a triangle at the Junction ostensibly so that a train might go out head first, so to speak, and doubtless it had long had a part in the shifting operations. That day, however, it was apparently thought best not to use it, which fact accounted for our backing all the way out to Larrabee's. Well, we had a good front view from the rear end, anyway, and we were all ready to start back with the engine on front when we arrived there.

Ordinarily, there was no combination coach, we were told. Theoretical passengers could ride in the "buggy"; but for this trip a neat and cleanly refurbished combination baggage and smoking car, old style, was brought along, polished brass kerosene lamps and all. This was one of numerous courtesies extended to us by the Rutland Railroad.

Whiting, Shoreham, Orwell, Huff's Crossing and Larrabee's Point—these were the stations, albeit "Shoreham" was not Shoreham village but the much smaller community of East Shoreham, and Orwell was not Orwell village but four miles away at what is locally known as North Orwell. Nor was Larrabee's Point really the Point itself. That was half a mile or so down the lake from the railhead. Once a spur went over to the Point, but that was long ago.

But from the building of the road in 1871 up to 1920, Larrabee's Point was not the terminus at all. The line crossed the lake on the trestle and draw-bridge, hit the D. & H. at what they called Addison Junction, then went up the lake—that's south, you know—apparently on the Delaware & Hudson track to its station, Ticonderoga. Of course, following what appears to have been a definite pattern, this was not Ticonderoga, either the town or the fort, but a station just called that near Montcalm Landing.

According to the "Baby Pathfinder," dated May 15, 1910, there were two trains a day each way over the branch, and it took an hour and ten minutes for them to go from Ticonderoga to Leicester Junction—fifteen miles. Our train did not make so good time as that, but doubtless the rails were shiny in 1910 and grass and weeds were not growing out of the ties. The cow paths were probably over the fence and not along the road bed. Our trip out and back took about five hours, what with a rather long stop at Orwell unloading a boat, picking up an ancient coal car at Huff's and spotting, for the last time, a full car of feed. Oh, yes. There was another stop—courtesy of the road

again—especially for us fans with cameras. It was at the covered bridge near where Shoreham station had been.

And here again, the Addison should have been entitled to extra distinction in its passing. It had a covered bridge, quite a picturesque one across the Lemon Fair and one of the seven remaining such railroad bridges in the state. Now there are six: five on the St. J. & L.C. and one on the B. & C.

We think of that part of the Champlain Valley as practically flat. But it is not quite that, and the engineers who laid out the line must have done considerable survey work to find a practicable grade through the swales and gullies. That is the why of its more or less serpentine course and why, presumably, no road closely paralleled it, and why, in turn, few farms are to be seen along the way. One thing we did notice, however, was an abundance of the old stump fences, remaining from the first land-clearing days, and also, as nowhere else in the state, an abundance of teasels. What is a teasel? Well, if you know old-time farm lore, particularly of sheep and wool days, you should know teasels. They are weeds now, but once upon a time their prickly, spiny burrs were used to raise the nap on woolen cloth and, so I have heard, it was long before anything mechanized took their place. Why there should be so many there I do not know except that that was sheep country, and the books say teasels usually are found around the sites of old wool mills.

Whether the Addison Branch ever was a paying institution we do not know. It would seem doubtful. There were no sizable communities along the line, no manufacturing plants of consequence. It did link the main line of the Rutland with the Delaware & Hudson lake-shore line until it was no longer practicable to maintain the bridge across the lake. But in view of the similar connection only a little farther south between Rutland and Whitehall, this factor could not have been of great importance.

The road did traverse, however, the heart of Vermont's sheep country supreme, and in the 1870's this should have meant something to the railroad. Later, there have been cattle to ship and at times some of our largest orchardists have shipped their crops over the branch.

In the most recent years, however, milk plants at Whiting and Huff's Crossing have furnished most of the business. The business from Whiting will, in fact continue, for not quite all of the branch was abandoned. The mile or two from Leicester Jct. to this station was left as a spur track for the Hood's milk plant. And this will serve as a reminder of the little road that chugged back and forth for eighty years across Addison County, Vermont.

3. SOME HIGH LIGHTS OF HARDWICK HISTORY *by* ANNA M. SPAULDING

Many of our towns do not have a published history, and as time goes on such records as exist tend to vanish, and older men and women with a knowledge of the past also go the way of all flesh. Sometimes, documents of various kinds can be collated and something in the way of a history assembled that will be useful when a complete history is written. In the meantime, we suggest that sketches, similar to this one about a town be written and sent to us for publication. Editor.

The First Settler in Hardwick

The first settler in the town, beyond all question, was Mark Norris. The following extract from the memorandum found among his papers in the hands of his executor, shows his indomitable courage and perseverance:

"I went from Dewey's Gore, so-called [now a part of the towns of Peacham and Danville], and made a pitch in Hardwick on the 16th day of May, in the year 1788, which was the first pitch that ever was made in the town, and immediately went down to Dewey's Gore and brought up a bushel of potatoes, planted likewise, cut down five acres of trees, and the next winter after I lost my potatoes by the frost, and then the next spring went down to Dewey's Gore and brought two or three bushels more and brought them up on my back, for it was such bad walking that it was next kind to impossible getting through with a horse. Likewise I had to bring all my provisions from Dewey's Gore, which is sixteen miles, that it made it very bad. Governor Robinson promised that he would do as well by me as any other proprietor had done by settlers, and I expected that the Governor would have built a mill immediately after I went there to work, which if I had known that there would not have been no mills there, I would not have settled in Hardwick upon any consideration. The third year I raised as much as eighty bushels of wheat and other grain, but it was so far from any mill that it was worth but little to me."

Mr. Norris married on the 8th of August, 1791, and moved with his wife to Hardwick, March 13, 1792, being five days on the journey from Epping, N. H. [Reference: *Gazetteer of Caledonia and Essex Counties* by Hamilton Child, p. 205.]

1792–1793 in Hardwick History

The town of Hardwick, containing 23,040 acres, was granted Nov. 7, 1780, and chartered Aug. 19, 1781, to Danforth Keyes, and his eighty associates by Thomas Chittenden, governor of the com-

monwealth of Vermont. This grant was made while Vermont was an independent republic. The portion of land granted, six miles square, was located according to the points of the compass, in latitude 44 degrees, 31 minutes; in longitude 72 degrees, 20 minutes.

The surface of the township was described as pleasantly diversified with swells and vales, having in general a southerly slope. The Lamoille river enters the town very near the northeast corner, and, after running a course about ten miles, affording, together with its tributaries, several excellent mill-privileges, it makes its exit a little north of the southwest corner of the town line.

The earliest settlers found the land heavily timbered, maple, birch, hemlock, spruce, etc., predominating. The maple groves were remarkably fine, yielding both timber and sugar. The rock formations mentioned were granite, gray limestone, slate, quartz, with fine specimens of rock crystals. The rich fertile soil was found well adapted for grazing purposes. Along the banks of the river, and extending for half a mile or so back from either side, lay table-lands. A mineral spring of considerable capacity was located in the southern part of the town.

In a certain "ciphering book," containing the names of the first settlers, Mark Norris made this record concerning himself: "I drove the first sleigh through the woods from Deweysburgh to Greensborough that was ever drove through by man, to my knowing, which was on the 4th of January, 1792." On his second visit, March 13, 1792, he brought his wife with him, the first white woman in town. Mark Norris settled near where Ralph C. Goodrich now lives. He was a mason by trade, and yet seemed to possess the faculty of turning his hand to various kinds of work; he, moreover, possessed energy, intelligence and good judgment. Norris was afterward much engaged in the public business of the town; he was at different times representative, treasurer, and a preacher of the gospel.

Toward the close of the month Nathaniel Norris, a cousin of Mark, moved, with his wife, into town. Soon after they were settled in their log cabin Mrs. Norris gave birth to a son, the first child born in this town, to whom they gave the name of Jonas Bundy Hardwick Norris. Nathaniel Norris, too, was a mason and a powerful man at labor, having made the record of felling an acre of trees daily for six consecutive days. His portion of land is included in the George E. Nolan farm. The following year in June, 1793, another cousin, David Norris, settled in town with his family on the farm now owned by John E. Hancock.

In the spring of 1793, these three cousins supplied themselves with

provisions sufficient, as they supposed, to last them through their spring's work, when they were expecting to return to Peacham for a while. They had no such thing as a team or even a hoe to work with; but with their axes they hewed out wooden hoe-blades from maple chips, hardened them in the fire, and took saplings for handles. With these they hoed in, on Nathaniel's land, two acres of wheat; but Saturday night came, when they had sowed only one acre, and they found they had only provisions enough to last them one day longer. What should they do? They were not professors of religion, but they had been trained to keep the Sabbath day. However, they now held a council, concluded that it was a "work of necessity," and hoed in the second and last acre on the Sabbath. "We shall see," said Mark and David, "whether this acre will not yield as well as the other." But Nathaniel was troubled in conscience. Reaping time came; the proceeds of the two acres were stacked separately, and the time for comparing drew near. The comparison was never made. The stack which came of the Sabbath day's work took fire from a clearing near by, and burned every straw and kernel of the stack. The Norris cousins were in the habit of religiously observing the Sabbath day. On the following Sabbath they held a religious meeting, and ever afterward this practice was kept up.

Railroad Service in Hardwick

A brief history of the St. Johnsbury and Lake Champlain Railroad is really essential in connection with the history of Hardwick. The people of Lamoille valley can well be proud of this small Vermont railroad that serves them, and of the men who built it. The building of this road reflects the noble inspiration of public-spirited men, and reveals a valiant and successful fight against adverse circumstances.

The Lamoille Valley Railroad was chartered in 1867. At this time the greatest help to the enterprise was an act of the Legislature of Vermont pertaining to the towns along the line and authorizing them either to buy securities or to pledge the credit of the town to guarantee interest on railroad securities.

Hardwick assumed a bonded indebtedness of $60,000, the last payment on which was made in 1905. Contracts for the building of the road were let in the latter part of the year 1869. Work was to be done in two sections—one from St. Johnsbury to Hardwick, about thirty-five miles, the other from Swanton to Cambridge. Ground was broken December 22, 1869, at St. Johnsbury by Thaddeus Fairbanks amidst an outburst of applause from the enthusiastic crowd of onlook-

ers. Guns were fired, followed by a blast of trumpets and lively music from a band in attendance.

An important day in Hardwick, January 1, 1872, marked the arrival of a passenger train from St. Johnsbury. This first passenger train to arrive here was greeted by a crowd of people as enthusiastic if not as large as that in St. Johnsbury when the work was begun.

Morrisville, Hardwick, Hyde Park, and Johnson have always more loyally supported the road than other towns along the line. Whenever danger threatened the road, these towns have rallied to its support. For example, about the first of April, 1872, there was an exceptionally heavy snowfall. The snow-plow was derailed and useless. It looked as if the entire line would of necessity have to be shut down. The railroad employees had become exhausted and could do no more. Hardwick came to the rescue with a crew of fifty-three men who worked for forty-eight hours, built a temporary plow and cleared the line—all done without expense to the management of the road.

The building work progressed at each end of the proposed line; the two sections met at Cambridge Junction June 29, 1877, and on Monday, July 2nd, the road was officially opened. Governor Horace Fairbanks drove the silver spike handed to him by Colonel Jewett, the superintendent of the road, when the last rail was laid at Fletcher, July 17. Here the two passenger trains met, bringing an immense gathering of people among whom were notables from other New England states as well as prominent state officials. The celebration was colorful and impressive.

For a considerable number of years thereafter the financial affairs were ably managed and the earnings of the new road most satisfactory. With the extension of feeding lines into Essex county an immense amount of lumber was brought out. Hardwick, along with other towns in the valley, became the shipping point for varied products, such as lumber, dairy products, livestock, etc. The new line greatly accelerated the manufacture of marble and granite. Henry R. Mack had for several years been engaged in monumental work in Hardwick. With the opening of this railroad other firms began quarrying and the number of cutting plants increased.

With the opening of granite quarries in Woodbury and their development the need of more efficient means of hauling rough granite from the quarries to the cutting plants became imperative. Teams hauling granite were slow, the large blocks being handled with difficulty. The haul required over eight miles of rough road to Hardwick. The Hardwick and Woodbury railroad was built principally for

hauling granite from the quarries in Woodbury operated by E. R. Fletcher and the Woodbury Granite Company. Other smaller firms engaged in quarrying also shipped granite over the line.

The Hardwick branch of the St. J. and L. C. R. R. was built in 1892, one and seven-tenths miles from Granite Junction. But the quarries were seven miles farther away, the more difficult grade up the mountain. Granite men continued to agitate the necessity of extending the line to the quarries. At a special town meeting held in Hardwick, July 6, 1895, the following resolution offered by William H. Taylor, was adopted: "Resolved, that the town of Hardwick aid in the construction of the Hardwick and Woodbury railroad by the purchase of 400 shares of capital stock of said railroad at par value of $25.00 each, agreeable to the provisions of Article 235 of the Acts of 1894." The stock of the road was floated partly by popular subscription, but mainly by the backing of John S. Holden and his associates.

Building work, begun in 1894, now continued under the direction of Frank Brown, chief engineer. Two years were required to complete the work. The road was finished and equipped ready for operation in 1897. The rolling stock consisted of three engines and some fifty cars. An engine house and repair shop were built at the Hardwick terminal. Given the railroad, the quarries began to develop rapidly. Besides the granite handled, other heavy commodities as coal, iron, lumber, tools and oil used in quarrying and manufacturing, made a large volume of freight. The heaviest train ever taken down the mountain was made up of twenty-two cars all heavily loaded except one empty coal car. The heaviest single stone ever brought down the mountain over this road weighed sixty-one tons and came from the so-called White quarry.

Between the years 1903 and 1916 the road was operated at full capacity. During this period two train crews were employed. One did the yard work and delivered the finished granite to Granite Junction. The main line crew made two trips daily to the quarries in Woodbury and brought out twenty, thirty, forty, and sometimes as many as fifty carloads of stone in a day.

This railroad had the distinction of reaching the highest point of altitude of any railroad ever operated in the state of Vermont. A trip by rail to the Woodbury quarries was considered by many as one of the most scenic trips in New England. During the summer months excursion trains were run to accommodate parties from other New England states as well as visitors from a distance. Frequently large parties were taken, once at least five hundred people were in the party. Passenger trains with flat and passenger cars were run regularly between Hardwick and Woodbury for ball games played at Prospect

in Hardwick and at Woodbury by teams representing those two rival towns struggling for baseball honors.

The management of the road included such men as Judge Fullerton, John S. Holden, Charles W. Leonard, George H. Bickford, E. H. Blossom, J. V. Dutton, William Clifford, George James and Wallace C. Bailey.

Local men for the most part were employed on trains and in section crews, many of whom began as boys and continued years in service. Three section crews were employed to keep the nine miles of main lines and several miles of side track in perfect condition for heavy freight. Men handling the heavy trains on the steep mountain grades, operating switches, shunting loaded cars onto side tracks, during years of service are worthy of mention. Homer H. Calkins was employed as brakeman and later as conductor for twenty-four years, leaving the road only when the road ceased operating in 1934. Clyde C. Lane became an employee of the company in June, 1908, and after eight months' service as brakeman, was promoted to conductor, continuing in service until his resignation in 1922. Carroll H. Hines entered the service of the railroad in November 1900, at the age of fifteen years as brakeman, was later promoted to conductor in which capacity he continued until he resigned in June, 1927. The master mechanic, Charles A. Hubbard, began work for the company when the first rails were laid and continued in service for more than forty years, or until the road was abandoned. He it was who did all engine repair work or superintended it, acted as chief engineer, making regular trips to and from the quarries, and served in capacity of foreman of the engine men. All these men and their associates did their work so efficiently that during the whole period of operating the railroad no trainman was injured seriously except Archie Olmstead, who was killed by falling between two moving freight cars.

After the road was abandoned in 1934, most of the old records were destroyed. The pay rolls were fortunately salvaged from the heap of refuse by Carroll Hines, and to him we are indebted for much of the data for this article.

4. PLACE NAMES IN PEACHAM *by* SUSIE A. ABBOTT

Our search for place names goes steadily on as we look forward, some satisfying day, to the publication of a volume that will cover all Vermont place names. We invite brief summaries like this one by Mrs. Abbott. Editor.

Peacham has the distinction of being the only town, not only in the U.S. but in the world, to bear this name. No one knows the origin

of the name. One theory is that the town was named for a popular English actress of the time, Polly Peachum. If so, the spelling was altered, changing the *u* to *a* in the last syllable. Another theory is that it was named for a Mr. Meacham, changing the first letter, but no record remains to support the theory.

In the western part of the town is a high rocky hill known as "Devil Hill." Beyond this hill lies a vast lumber lot known as "The Bog." In early days part of this area was inhabited, and it is said there was a tavern there. One day, a man was on his way home from the tavern and said he saw the Devil fly over his head and alight on the rocky summit of this hill. It is supposed he saw an eagle, and possibly he was in a condition which suggested the devil; at least the name clings.

Nearby is Onion River Pond which is the headwaters of the Onion River or Winooski, to give it its Indian name. This is now usually called Peacham Pond.

Most of our hills and ponds were named for the men who lived nearby or owned property there. There are a few exceptions. Ewell's Pond used to be known as "Mud Pond" as it has a shell-marl bottom, very smelly at low water. "Little Mud" also has mud bottom and swampy surroundings.

"Academy Hill" is just west of the main village known as "Peacham Corner." This hill was the original site of Peacham Academy, which stood there for many years. A nearby woodlot was given to the Academy by Abial Blanchard to furnish fuel for the Academy; this was called "The Academy Woods." A wood-pile always stood near the Academy, and unruly boys were set to work with a bucksaw on this pile; so the Academy was always well supplied with fuel. Now the name "Academy Hill" applies only to the steep highway down the western side of the hill.

East Peacham was "The Hollow," well-named as it is situated in a deep valley between two steep hills. I have heard that the road through East Peacham toward Barnet was called "Hog Alley," as the droves of hogs for the Boston market were driven over this road. South Peacham was called "Water Street," as it is situated at the confluence of three or four brooks; and when the mill stood, the dam made a waterfall.

"Penny Street"—tradition has it that many years ago a man who lived on this road had trouble with the tax collector, and the next year paid his entire tax in pennies.

"H'a Penny Road" branches off this road. In early days this was

called "Pilfer Street" for some long-forgotten reason. A few years ago Dr. James Sever of Boston came to Peacham and purchased the only farm on this short crossroad. A city friend while visiting him was amused by the name "Penny Street" and said, "If that is Penny St. this should be about h'a penny street." This idea pleased the doctor, and at the next town meeting a letter was read from him asking the town to give him permission to name his road "H'a Penny Road." His request was granted, and today neat signs at the ends of the road indicate it is officially named.

"Green Bay." This little settlement is said to have received its name from the remarks of a woman who used to visit there. She lived with her daughter in Green Bay, Wis., and when she came to Peacham for a visit she would say, "This place reminds me so much of Green Bay."

"Rake Factory." Years ago Mr. Warden built a rake factory on a brook in the extreme eastern part of the town; here he made both wheel and drag rakes. Although both factory and dam have been gone for years, it is still known as "The Rake Factory."

"The Long Swamp." South of South Peacham the highway runs through a long swampy section into the town of Barnet and around the base of Harvey's Mountain between the mountain and Harvey's Lake and back to Peacham. In "horse and buggy days" this delightful drive was known as "Flirtation Avenue"; at the top of a certain gully was "The Kissing Spot."

"Burg Logan." This section of town, which used to support a school of forty pupils but has now lost its last house, was called "Burg Logan" with the accent on the last syllable. One tradition is that this was named from a place in Scotland; another tale is that it is two old Scotch words meaning "The Other Neighborhood," and it was sometimes called "T'other Neighborhood"; later it was known as the "Town Farm District," but since the last of the buildings burned, it is known as "The Foster Pond Neighborhood," and few remember its old name.

"Cow Hill." This hill is in the northern part of the town, and the legend is that a farmer's cow stayed out all winter one year and came out all right in the spring. There are two parts of "Cow Hill," and about 1890 an observatory was constructed on the western elevation which was given the name of "Lookout Mt." Deacon James Kinerson was one of the prime movers in getting the observatory built, and one rather illiterate man in town used to call it "Deacon Jim's Purgatory."

The observatory only stood a few years before it was struck by lightning and was never rebuilt; so the name ceased to be used.

In this section of town there was a little settlement called "Rowsey Town," presumably on account of the dissension between families in the neighborhood. Another road was known as "Slack Street," but this, too, is one of the "whys" I cannot answer.

"Keyser Pond," which lies partly in Danville, was named "Keyser's Pond" for an Indian who lived near it. When Keyser killed a deer, he would borrow the copper kettle from one of his neighbors to cook his venison. When he returned the kettle, it always shone as only a copper kettle can shine, and it always contained a piece of the meat. Mrs. Bacon asked him one day how he made it so much brighter than she could, and he said, "Heap much sand!"

Another section was always called "The Lost Nation"; whether it was because it was so far from other settlements and had no church, store or postoffice or for some other reason I have never heard.

It is difficult now to find anyone who remembers the old stories of the place names, and many names have been forgotten.

LETTERS FROM THE PAST

In January, 1852, Andrew J. Roberts departed from his home in Walden, Vt., for California, with a case of what was known as the "California fever," in search of gold. His courageous young wife, Mathilda, nineteen years old, remained in Walden. While he was away, his son was born. We suggest you overlook the heartaches revealed in the letters and note the shining courage and faith we see in the faded script of a century ago. Editor.

15.

Respected and Mutch loved Husband Walden December 4th 1852

It is with pleasure that I once more attempt to write you. I was somewhat disapointed on the reception of your last letter that you did not write something about your claims. We had made up our minds that we should know in that letter all about your claims, how mutch you were making &c. We should feel a great deal better if you would write just how mutch you are making. We think sometimes you are doing something. At other times, we fear you are not doing anything, and it is not because we think so much of the gold that you get, but we want you to get ready to come home. It seems sometimes as though the time never would come for you to come home, yet I trust it will before the expiration of another year if it is the Lords will. But we know not what a day or an hour will bring forth. Perhaps before this letter will reach you I shall be in Eternity or perhaps at this very moment I am writing to one that is no more, the Lord only knows, but let us trust in him be it as it may, knowing that he is a just God and that all things will work together for good to those that love him.

O how important that we should be prepared for our great and last change. Life is uncertain, death is certain. Indeed, tis a melancholly sound to those that have no God, but O how different to those who have a God that they can claim as theirs. To sutch the hour of death must be a happy hour. They can say with the Poet, welcome death, I gladly go with thee. O what a change and what a happy change to be ushered from Earth to heaven from the presence of sinful men into the presence of the Lamb of God and all his holy angels that never sinned no nor never can sin. Can sutch an hour be anything but pleasant

to a christian? No surely not; O my dear Husband, Let us be prepared to welcome the messenger of death at any moment.

I should like to have you write more particular about the state of your mind. Whether you have any enjoyment or not write long letters. 5th another Sabbath morn has dawned. I am not going to meeting today. Aunt Leavitt and Dudley are going. I have been to meeting one Sabbath since the babe was born. Left him with Aunt. He was very good, did not cry a word. He is very good child, the very image of his father. I guess you would like to see the little fellow.

We have had a very mild winter so far. Has not been 2 inches of snow at a time. Has not been but two Sabbath that they could go to meeting with sleighs. Will have to go with a wagon today. There is scarsely any snow to be seen. It is as warm as spring. Mrs. Ellis has just received another letter from her husband with another three hundred dollar check in it, making six hundred dollars he has sent home. Mr. Hasting has sent home 100, Alonza 100, Ben Patch some. I do not know how mutch. That company are all doing well.

Uncle Joel Shurtleff is dead, was buried last monday. Mother Fanny and James are well. Mother is not married yet. They all send their love. Dudley says he wants to hire you to work for him one or two months after you get through, says he will pay one hundred per month and run the risk of your getting anything. He has had quite a notion of comeing out there, but guess he will not this month or next. The Calafornia fever does not rage quite as high as it did last year. He wants you to write what you are making and all about it. Be sure and write and when you are coming home. Steven Ellis is married. George Bixbys wife has another little girl, only a fornight younger than our little boy.

Mrs. Steabens is yet alive but has lost one eye, is very mutch afflicted, I saw her a few days ago. I should not have known her. Have not seen her before since last may. She thinks her lot is hard.

Sabbath eve finds me writing to one that is thousands of miles from here and my pen falters and almost refuses to write when I think of the vast distance between us. How long shall we thus communicate our thoughts and feelings, but I fear we are not thankful enough for the privilege we do enjoy. We do not prise it so highly as we ought I fear, but I trust if the Lord spares our lives untill we see each other once more on the shores of time, we shall be thankful. If it was not for hope, what should we do? How gladly would I sit by your side this eve and converse with you, but it is not and thus it cannot be. But O how thankful ought we to be we have the same God to go to in prayer,

the same protector, the same Saviour to love, and the same Sun to shine upon us.

Aunt thinks she shall not write this time. She is well and Ella is also. She was very mutch pleased with her money. She says a great deal about papa, says he never will come home. My health is good and I enjoy myself as well as I can while your place is empty. My mind goes to Calafornia a good many times in a day and very often in my dreams in the night. I do not think of mutch more to write at present and I will close. Give my best respects to Uncle and George and accept the love yourself from your unworthy wife Matilda T. Roberts

[*This poem is written on the last sheet of the foregoing letter. Ed.*]

I Wait for thee

The hearth is swept, the fire is bright,
The kettle sings for tea;
The cloth is spread, the lamps are light,
The hot cakes smoke in napkins white,
And now I wait for thee.

Come home, come home, thy task is done,
The clock ticks [laughingly?],
The blinds are drawn, the curtains drawn,
The boy is on my knee.

Come home, come home—his deep fond eye
Looks round him wistfully,
And when the whispering winds go by,
As if the welcome step were nigh,
He crows exultingly.

In vain—he finds his welcome vain
And turns his glance on mine
So earnestly that yet again
His form unto my heart I strain—
That glance is so like thine.

Thy task is done, we miss thee here;
Where'er thy footsteps roam,
No heart will spread such kindly cheer,
No beating heart, no listening ear,
Like these will with thee home.

Aha! along the crisp walk fast
Thy well known step doth come;
The bolt is drawn, the gate is past,
The babe is wild with joy at last—
A thousand welcomes home!

[*The handwriting is fine in texture and girlish in character. The words, dimmed by a hundred years and much reading, are all decipherable except*

the word in the bracket. It seems, however, to be an accurate replacement. The poem is certainly revealing in its sentiment, and it also shows poetic skill and sense. Ed.]

16.

Beloved wife Weber Crick, Dec 11, 1852

It is with pleasure that I take my pen in hand this evening to write a few lines to you. I received your letter of Oct 1 about one week since, and be asured it was a source of relief to me to learn that you were so much recovered and also to hear a description of the boy. I should be very hapy to see you both. I hope it will not be a great many months or years at least. The male for the first of Dec is in, but I have not learned whether a letter for me or not, and shall not untill after I send this to the Office as I can send it by a gentleman in the morning, so you will have to excuse a short one this time. I received the lock of the boys hare that you inclosed in your letter.

I have not seen Joseph since last Sunday. He was well then but somewhat downharted. He has his ups and downs here two as he used to at home. You said in your last letter that I would not mind his fretting. I can say to you that we never have had the the first word of difaculty since we left home. He is at work at Gold hill about six miles from here with one of the Gillis boys and A. J. Hill, and the other Gillis boy is here with me. They are mining. We are cuting some saw logs.

I received a letter from Brother T. A. Ellis from Columbia in the southern mines. He writes that they are doing and they are all well. Joseph has not the letter yet. He has talked considerable this fall about going to the Southern mines this winter. I expect he will want to go now. If he gose it will be imposable for me to go for the present, but I think we had better stay where we are, for runing round in Calafornia is poor business.

It is now the 11th of Dec, has been a very warm day, the nights are rather cool, but the ground has frozen but once or twice this fall. The summer has been rather cool for this country. We had one very hot week the first of June. The mercury stood at one hundred and twenty in the shade (120) sixty common summer heat. There has not been much rain this fall as yet. I do not feel very much like writing this evening. I have worked very hard all day. I sent home two specamins, one to you in one letter, and one to Aunt in another, I want you to write whether you received them or not. Give my respects to all inquiring friends. I want you should kiss the boy for me. George was

well the last time I saw him two weeks ago. Write every two weeks. direct to Coloma Eldorado County Cal. from your husband A. J. Roberts

17.

Beloved wife Gold Hill Dec 26th 1852

I take my pen in hand this morning to write a few lines in Josephs letter to you. My health is very good at this time, and I hope these few lines will find you injoying the same blessing. I am glad Joseph has got in the way of writing, for I know that Aunt would much rather have a letter of his writing than mine. The folks here are all well as usual. Business rather dull. I want you should write me about things in Vermont, the Church, the prayer meetings, and everything else you can think of. I have not received a letter from you now for two mails. I hope you will be a little more puntual about writing. I hope you will not fail to write once in two weeks direct to Coloma. I shall be sure to get them from there. I should like to know how the boy gets along. I should like see him first rate well and his mother also, and I hope I shall sometime in the course of two years or less. We have had a great freshet here since I wrote you last. Sacramento was under water and the water was six or seven feet deep in the street. It was almost as bad as the fire for the people. The roads here now are very bad, and everything is very high, flour is worth 45 cents per pound, pork 40 cents, potatoes 20 cent pers lb, buter 1.00, molasses 2.00 per galon, board from 10.00 to 15.00 per week. If we have as mutch rain for two weeks to come as we have for two weeks past, flour will be worth 1.00 per pound. I am at work on Weber Crick near the place where I first was. I have not time to write more today. Give my love to all inquiring friends from your husband A. J. Roberts Mathilda T. Roberts East Hardwick Vt.

Gold Hill Dec th 26 1852

Kind and respeced absent but not forgoten wife

I often think of the prayers that I have had offered by you, my dear wife for the Church and siners around us. I often to think of the privlege that I enjoid, but, my dear wife, I am deprived of those privligs now, but I love to think of those prayer meetings when God by his Spirit met with us and blest us and we felt that it was good to meet together to worship God. Oh, my dear wife, what a privelig it will be for me to met with you now, my dear wife, in a prare meeting, but alas I canot meet with you. Now, oh my dear wife, pray without

recesing and in everything give thanks to God. Remember your husben, my dear, when you come round the family alter. Altho I am absent in body, my thouts are present with you. I often think of the time when we shall meet agane if my life and helth are spared. I have enjoid exclent helth since I have ben here. I have had rather bad luck since I come work in Calafornia, but I hope my luck will turne soon. It [?] not to me when I shal come home, but I hope the time is not far distant. I hope, my dear wife, you will be careful of your helth. Tell father and mother that I have not forgotten them and my prayer and desire to God is that thare last dayes may be thare best days and much of thare time pure [?] to God. Pray for your unworthy sun. Tell Dudley take good care of things. Tell Ella that she must be a good girl and lerne her book. Mama must ciss Ella for par from your loving husben Joseph Leavitt

My helth is good. I think it rather strange that you do not write. Cannot write more for D is most ready to start. C.L.

18.

My dear Husband Bridgewater Jan. 30th 1853

I received your letter of Dec 11th, was very glad to hear once more that you were well. Was sory you did not write what you were making. I feel very anxious to know how much you are making that I can give something of a guess when you are coming home. You said you hoped it would not be many months before we should meet again. I hope it will not. It seems now as though you had been gone six years, but it is not but a little over a year. I hope I shall never see another such a year. How oft have bitter tears of grief rolled down my cheeks. How oft has my pillow been wet at night, how oft have I looked at that mineature and covered the glass with tears. I hope I shall not shed as many more tears as I have shed before I see you again. I think you better not stay much longer any way. Better come back and go to diging gold in Vt. They are finding of it here, have found some in Bridgewater. It is the opinion of some that there is a gold mine runing through the State but they dont know. They think that those that want to go to Cal better wait awhile and see. Some have no faith in it, but there is one man that has seen some of the quarts says it is richer than any that he ever saw in Cal.

I guess you begin to think that there is not so much gold there as you thought, for you write you wanted to know whether Aunt and I ever received the specimens or not. We did as I have written before. Your letters all come directly, and I am sory mine do not go better.

I know very well how you feel when you do not receive a letter for some time, and I shall continue to write as often as I have before whether you receive them or not. I received a letter from Aunt Leavitt a few days ago. She wrote that she had just received a letter from Uncle Leavitt with a piece of gold in it. She wrote that they were all well. I was very glad to hear that you had not had any dificulty with him, hope you never will have. I told you in my last letter that James was at Montpelier. I received a letter from him last week stating that he was well and doing well and what was far more important that he had found peace in believing and joy in the Holy Ghost said they were having quite a revival. He was very serious when he left Walden. I was sorry to have him leave then, but the Savior was there as well as in Walden. The winter has been very mild, so far is considerable snow now. We had not had such a winter before for a great while. My health is prety good. I have had a very severe cold since I came down here whitch did not make me feel very well. I am at work now at dressmaking, think I shall make out to earn my board, for the [?] think I shall not go back to Walden at present. I mean to work out this year and see if I cannot pay up my last year bills. Dont know how I shall stand it, but I shall if anybody will hire me. The baby is well except a bad cold whitch I am in hopes he will get over before many days. He is a good deal of company for me, dont know what I should do without him. The most I am afraid of is that I shall love him too well and the Lord will take him from me. He has got so that he will laugh and play a good deal. Dont know as I have any more news to write this time. Give my respects to Uncle and George and accept the love yourself. direct to W-as usual from your devoted Wife M. T. Roberts

19.

Beloved Wife Weber Crick Feb. 6th, 1853

It is with pleasure that I take my pen in hand to adress a few lines to you. I have not received but one letter from you since you were sick and that was one bairing date of Oct 11th. The first one you wrote after you were sick. I heard from you in December by the way of Mr. Vincent. He wrote to George that you were well and that the boy growed fast. Joseph is well. He and I and the two Mr. Gillis's are at work together. You would think we lived prety well if you could see the pile of slap jacks that we eat every meal. Flour is worth 18 cts and everything else about in the same proportion. Everything has been so high that it has cost us most all we could make to live,

but we are doing very well now. My health is very good at this time and I hope these few lines will find you enjoying the same blessing. I want to see you and my boy very much, and I look forward to the time with same satisfation although it looks some distance ahead. If you have not named the boy yet and want to I should name him. I would call him Franklin A. J., but I do not want should [?] it. I have no more time to write now. Write soon direct to Coloma. yours ever A. J. Roberts

20.

Dear Husband Bridgewater Feb 27th, 1853

Once more I take my pen to write a few lines to you. I felt very much disappointed when I found there was no letter for me in the last Steamer. My health is very good at this time and I enjoy myself well, am in Bridgewater, yet do not know how long I shall stay. They want me to stay untill you get back. It will depend altogether upon how much longer you are gone. If you should stay longer than next fall, I do not think I shall stay. It is posible that I may stay till then but do not know certain, but if you should come home any time before next fall I think you better stop at the Junction and come here (it is only 17 miles) unless I should conclude to go back up north but if I do I shall write to you. I did not think when I came down I should stay more than four or five weeks at any rate, but they say I can stay here just as well as there, and I do not know, but I can suppose it will not make any difference with you. It will be considerable cheaper for you. They will not charge any board and I think I shall work out if I can get a chance. I cannot get along without some money. It costs something to clothe the boy, but I would not ask you to send me any till you can without making you short. I can get it some way. The baby is getting so that I can turn him off, will be six months old next Saturday, has got another tooth, can sit alone.

I have not heard from Walden since I wrote you before. I believe I have not written anything to you about James conversion. He wrote me some time ago that he was happy that he had started on his Heavenly journey. He stated that they were haveing quite a revival there at Montpelier which was a mater of rejoicing. O that the Lord would revive his work throughout the whole world. I do not think of much to write this time and I will close so goodbye. Affectionately yours M. T. Roberts

21.

My dear Husband, Sherbourne March 13th 1853

It is with pleasure that I take my pen once more to write a few lines

to you. I have not received a letter from you since the first of February. Do not know what to think. I fear you are sick but hope not. Time seems very long when I do not get letters from you. I am at Uncle Benjamins, am having a very pleasant visit, do not know when I shall go back to Bridgewater. In the course of a week or two I think. Am in hopes I shall get some sewing to do here. I am [?] very anxious to know how you are getting along. I fear that you are not doing very well. Papers state that they are having it hard in Cal, and I fear it is too true. If you ever get enough to come home with again, I hope you will take it and come home. I think we can get a living some way, and I dont see as there is any prospect of your getting any more than that there. I wish you could go where Mr. Ellis and the rest of the Company are, think you would do much better there. Mr. Hastings wrote that they four were (Ellis Hastings Patch and Alonzo) making from forty to Fifty dollars. I think there is some prospect of their comeing home sometime.

My health is very good, but I do not enjoy myself well, am downhearted and discouraged, feel very lonesome and homesick. Let me where I will, I do not feel as though I had any home, and I was about to say friends but I know better than that. I am very low in my mind or I should not feel so lonely and sad. I have been going round from place to place so much that I have not prayed enough. I hope, my dear Husband, you will pray for me. I feel as though I needed the prayers of a Christian. How glad would I be if we could kneel by the same alter today and pour out our souls in prayer to God for his goodness to us in preserving our lives and health and many other blessings which we enjoy, but as this cannot be I hope we shall not forget to pray although we are far apart and hope that the time is not far distant when we shall enjoy the privilege of meeting together.

Fran is well and grows very fast, weighs 19 lb. my weight is one hundred and ten, am rather poor for me. Tomorrow is my 20th birthday. It don't seem hardly posible that I am so old. I have not heard from walden since I wrote you before. Do not think of much more to write. Do not feel much like writing. Would not, but I do not mean to fail of writing once a fortnight and I hope you will not but I must close, so goodbye . . . from you unworthy Wife M. T. Roberts

Footnotes to Vermont History: A Department

From time to time in this new department we will publish various items in the nature of clues, corrections, interpretations, and in certain instances where a traditional item may furnish a possible lead to an historical fact, that traditional version of deed or incident will be included. We will welcome items falling in any of the above categories. The items may be sent in any convenient form. Many times a casual item sends a flash of light into the past and illuminates a dark corner of history.

1. Cholera *From* Sherman M. Howe (VHS), Reading, Vt.

More than once in a forgotten Vermont pioneer cemetery we have checked the tombstones and suddenly realized we were looking at the death record of an epidemic of cholera that swept through the settlement long ago. The letter below was sent to Eli Holden of Barre, Vt., who was a brother of Jessie Holden of Reading, Vt. The letter reflects across 120 years the fear and anguish of those in the midst of the deadly disease. The text is edited in items of punctuation only. Editor.

Lacolle, Quebec, Canada.
June 19, 1832

Respected Uncle,

I improve this opportunity to inform you of our health which is good at present, hoping that these few lines will find you enjoying the same blessings of God which is the best of Heavens blessings. We have no news except the cholera is very destructive in this part of our land. It came into Montreal on Monday the 11th of this month and on Saturday following it was reported for a fact that there had been fifteen hundred cases and eight hundred deaths. The people are very much alarmed in this part. This day given up to fasting and prayer and the emmigrants are almost without number and have not where to lay their head, no person suffering them to enter their dwellings and they are almost in a state of starvation. There has been a number found by the roadside insensible to everything but hunger. Our most skillful physicians are quite useless in this disorder. It is generally understood that brandy is the only thing that will effect the cure. I believe that and laudlum (laudnum) is the only things applied. In Plattsburg there has been four (?) cases within a week. It is all around us and Lord only knows how long before we shall see the goings in

our family. We wrote to you not long since but we think it proper to inform you of this distressing sickness which lays waste and spreads desolation among the inhabitants of this country. All business in Montreal has stopped. Beef will putrify within three hours after it is kill. People are leaving the town and going into the country for health. We are looking for it every hour in our town. The cry of every soul is God have mercy on us all. The steamboats have stopped coming down the lake and all other kinds of commerce at present. We mailed a letter to you last week but it may be you have not got it. If you have not I will mention Jonas was married on the fifth day of this month to Miss Caroline M. Gaskill of N. H. We have nothing more at present to write only we are preparing the way of the Lord by calling on His name day and night and may God inspire our hearts to call on His name in faith. This may be the last. Fair ye well in the Lord. Write to us as fast as you get this letter the family being together and sends our love to you all. We leave you in the hands of our God, Amen.

Signed:

Jessie H. Mendell
Jonas Mendell
Abijaih Mendell
Lucy Mendell

To Eli Holden and all inquiring friends.

N. B. This sickness takes hold generally of the common people and the profane and drunkards. May God defend us from these evils.

2. Indenture on Child

From Mrs. James N. Currie, East Montpelier, Vt.

The original of this indenture was found among old papers belonging to Mrs. Currie's great grandfather. It was by no means unusual for a widow in the period indicated "to bind out and place" a child under the conditions stated in this particular indenture. One hopes that Enoch lived up to his agreement and that little Sarah found a pleasant home with him. Editor.

The indenture within sath that Phoebe Carpenter of Barre County of Orange and State of Vermont doth by these presents put, bind out and place as an apprentice unto Enoch Cate of Montpelier County of Caledonia town State aforesaid her daughter Sarah Carpenter to dwell with and serve him the Enoch Cate from the day of the date hereon until she the said Sarah arrives to the age of fourteen years during which time the said Sarah is to obey all his lawful commands and duly and faithfully serve him her said master in all respects as becomes a child of her age and station.

And the said Enoch Cate on his part hereby covenants and promises to use all reasonable endeavors to instruct or cause her the said Sarah to be instructed in the art of a spinster, seamster and housekeeping agreeably to what is usually done to a girl of her age and station, and also to instruct her or cause her to be instructed in the art of reading so that she shall understand the Word. And at all times during the aforesaid period furnish her with good and suitable meat, drink, clothing, lodging, nursing and phisic, necessary in sickness and health and at the end of said time furnish and deliver unto her two new suits of clothes one suitable for Sundays the other for everyday wear. In witness therof the parties unto interchangably set their hands and seals this 1 day of August 1803.

Enoch Cate
Phoebe Carpenter

3. Did Stephen Douglas Attend the Arnold District School?

From Theodore W. H. Johnson, Brandon, Vt.

For a year I have been trying to straighten out a matter of historical interest concerning the attendance by Stephen Arnold Douglas as a boy at the present Arnold District School. In one of your publications of the Society over a year ago, I read an account in which the writer stated that young Stephen went to a graded school, the site of which is now the Brandon State School. With all due respect to the writer of the said article named above, I started a little research work of my own and found many facts which I believe may be of interest. To verify the facts I consulted Mr. Lawrence Chamberlain, who is at present compiling a fictional history of Vermont. With his help I found the following:

First records (Town of Brandon), Page 80, Book number One.

a. Number of scholars in Arnold School 62 in 1810
b. " " " " " " 58 " 1811

From the *Rutland County History* (1886)

a. "Young Douglas remained on the Edward Fiske farm until he was fifteen years of age acquiring a good common school education at the Arnold School House and at the old Academy."

Edward Fiske, I find, was Stephen's uncle. He was a hard man, a driver I presume, although considered a good farmer. The original farmhouse burned, but another took its place and is now occupied by a family by the name of Bruce. Edward and his daughter Emily are buried in a field back of the house. I have taken pictures of the tomb-

stones or markers, which I enclose. The Fiske farm was about one-half mile from the Arnold School going west, and three and one half miles from Brandon.

I estimate the first building date of the Arnold District School to be about 1804. I am enclosing a picture of the present school taken last year. The brick used in building was taken from the Leicester brick kiln which few people remember

The information which I have given proves that Stephen Douglas did attend the Arnold District School as a boy. This school is now in use, and is in splendid condition.

The farm which I own here in the Arnold District was at one time owned by James Fiske, another uncle of young Douglas. Here young Stephen lived occasionally when he helped uncle James with his farm work. The lady from whom he purchased the farm sold many valuable items which were owned by Stephen. One, a table, was purchased by someone who found a letter in a concealed drawer written by Abraham Lincoln to Douglas. This last statement I cannot verify as it is hearsay. However, the local furniture repair man vaguely remembers the sale and the discovery of the letter.

I cannot but regret that I arrived on the scene too late for the auction mentioned above. I would have cherished anything which belonged to the Douglas family. However, it is with a feeling of awe and mingled pride that I cast an eye over the countryside hereabouts and think that here was born a great and famous man who as a boy lived and worked in much the same manner as I am doing at the present time.

4. A California Letter *From* Mrs. K. S. Field, Vergennes, Vt.

What would you have written if you had gone to California in the gold-rush days? Mrs. Karl S. Field writes: "George Fisher, Sr., built a large brick house in Waltham, Vt.—population in 1830, 330; at present, 193—in Addison County, that still stands and is in good condition. George, Jr., was born there. George, Jr., married Martha Stedman in 1840." In spite of his letter, his venture to the gold fields evidently brought no reward in gold, for Mrs. Field tells us he remained in debt. Editor.

California Marysvill March 25, 1850

Dear Father I have made out to get to the end of my journey but not as quick as I expected, but however I am sattisfied with it now. I have been four months to a day from the time I left home befoar I got in to the mines. I was fourteen days from New York to Schaggreas five days from Schaggreas to panama. there I stade five weeks and then I bought a ticket on the Ship Sea queen and sailed the six of

december and was thirty-two days from panama to san fransisco and made a very quick pasage for a sailing vessel. there was too hundred and twenty-five pasengers there was but one man dide out of the crue. som was sea sick and some had the measles.

I have not been sick at all. my health has been as good as it ever was. I am fifteen pownds hevier than I was when I left New York City. I stade in san fransisco one week and then six of us boys bought a bote and four months provisions and shipt for the mines. we was fifteen days from san francisco to marysvill wich is too hundred and twenty miles. there I found most all the vergennes boys. We stade there too days and then we started for the mines wich was fifty miles further. when we got there 'twas most night. Wee pitch our tent and turned in for the night after wee had cook our supers and eat it. Morning came, wee arose, cooked our grub, tuck our packs and pans and went too work. I work three weeks and got three hundread dollars. It rained and poured all the time I was there. there is as much gold in californey as people in a thousing years will dig. all the revenes have got gold in them and the hills and rivers. Any man that will work is sure of his ounce per day and from that too to pound per day. flower was one doll (ar) a pound when I got to the mines and other things in proportions, but when I left twas not but fifty cents a pound. I am now in marysvill and shall stay there three or four weeks. I can get twelve dollar a day too work carpenter and joiner work. if I had some tools here I could get from 16 to twenty-five dollars a day but I do not think much of that offer if I can make more in the mines. I shall go to the mines on the north Yuba river as soon as the snow gets of from the mountains so a man can work and not freeze to death. I shall not send home you any money if you can get along without it for I cannot get as much for the gold here as I can get in the states. if my health is good through the season I can get two or three thousand dollars and get home next winter and if I should get into a rich place I could get as much gold as I could lift. the country is delightful and pleasent and I am well pleased with it and if my family was here I never would come back into old vermont again. I spose you have herd of all the news here every month. there has been a flud here this part of this country and a great number of cattle drounded. William Hawley sent his respects to you and wants you to give them to his mother if you happen to see her anywher.

I have nothing more to write as I no of now. it is very healthy time here now. there is not but one man sick in this place and he is on the gain. tell John that he can make more money in one year here than he

ever made in his life but never to come here and leave his home for the sake of money for one dollar will buy as much a home as sixteen will buy here.

dear sisters Achsah and Lucy and Salome I have nothing to write to you as I no of only that you could get your ounce per day the year round and not work half as hard as you work now. One pie will sell for too dollars where it takes three to make a shadder—25 cents a piece for nut cakes not larger than your little finger and other things in proportion—one word to nelson—do not stay in waltham for one or two hundred a year—come out hear where you can make five hundred dollars a month and not work at all. the moon is most down and I cannot see to write any more. I want you all to write as soon as you get this letter for I want to here from you all. pleas direct your letters to san fransisco. So I will bid you all goodby
remember me in your prayers

George Fisher Junior

Folklore Department

EDITED *by* LEON W. DEAN
President, Green Mountain Folklore Society

Those Old Sheep Days

I would like to relate some incidents concerning my father's somewhat noted flock of registered Cotswold sheep.

First let me say that Cotswolds, and probably all sheep, are very proud and crave admiration and attention. For instance, in the winter Mother would have numerous dinner parties, and an afternoon visit was in order. The men would talk politics, farming and stock. Frequently before the guests left, Father would lead one of his prize sheep up to the house. It would leap up the granite steps and march into the parlor with the air of a five-star general on parade. Its pose was perfect, its head up.

The sheep were shown at the Orleans County Fair and at the Vermont State Fair when it was held in Burlington.

The sheep were driven a distance of five miles to Barton station. When they reached the turn to Roaring Brook Park, the leader would make a beeline for the sheds, but when turned back would travel with all speed to the freight station one mile away. Upon reaching her destination, she would leap into the first open car she spied, and it was quite a trick to get her and her followers into the right one.

In 1889, the Cotswolds went to the Bay State Fair, held in Mechanics Building, Boston. It was at this fair that the following incidents took place.

An elderly man, obviously of the banker type, with silk topper and gold-headed cane, was walking past the pens one day. Noticing the heavy fleeces of the sheep, he asked in astonishment:

"Is that all wool?"

Father answered—I am sure with a sober and very serious look—"Oh, no, sir. It's part cotton."

When the bystanders snickered, the man realized the situation and laughed heartily, saying: "That's right, boy. When anyone asks you such a perfectly foolish question, answer him as you did me."

Another day a bevy of girls came in from the Perkins Institute for

the Blind and paused at the pens. Father led a sheep out into the aisle. The girls were delighted and ran their hands over it, exclaiming about its broad back, its lovely foretop, its long wool. Father thought they were more observing than some who could really see.

Still another incident concerned a young man who was helping a showman from Caledonia County. It was late by the time the sheep were in their pens and ready for the opening, and the youth was more than hungry. The showman handed him a ten-dollar bill and told him to go out and have a real meal. The youth wandered into the Vendome, where they scanned him rather closely. Noting his clean overalls and frock, they seated him in the dining room, where the guests could be amused while he was eating. When he tried to pay his check, he was told the bill was paid. It amounted to eight dollars!

Father always said that showing stock at the fairs was a tough job, but that it took only a little Irish blood to enable a man to reap a good crop of enjoyment and meet many worthwhile people.

—Elnora L. Simpson, Glover

—&—

Made It Stick

The phrase about being "stuck on a girl" is derived from the old art of candy pulling, which was a favorite form of entertainment at parties. More than one boy and girl have been brought together for life by a sticky batch of molasses taffy.

—Willard T. Tresler, South Hero

—&—

Vermontisms

"make of" (make a fuss of)

"a mind to" (wanted, or wished to)

"wahn't" (wasn't or weren't)

"You don't have to shake the sheets to find her" (a fat woman)

"pick up the table" (clear the dishes off the table after a meal)

"dress" or "undress the feet" (put on or take off shoes and socks)

"done off" (referring to an attic or upper flat, unfinished—before it is "done off" for living quarters)

"put the drink (or food) right to him" (describing a glutton—a person "making a hog of himself")

"gooms" (gums)

—Joan N. Rendell, Warren

Hackadam

Hackadam is a thickly wooded section bordering the Hubbardton River, near the "Falls," which are not much of a falls except in spring freshet time or when the fish are running. A minister of inquiring mind worked on the problem of Hackadam—not willing to accept the version that it was a stronger-than-usual swear word. He found that, at one time, seven woolen mills stood near the river. He believed that a dam must have been erected to control the water to run the wheels for these mills and that the man who built the dam might have been a man named Hackett. Hence the dam might have been Hackett's Dam, later shortened to Hackadam.

—Clara M. Gardner, Burlington

—&—

Speech Difficulty

In the neighborhood where my grandfather lived was a boy, Johnnie, who stuttered badly.

Perhaps no one knew how to help him overcome his difficulty, and, according to stories, he must have suffered from the cruel mockery of "neighborhood kids," who, then as now, could be "meaner than dirt."

But Johnnie could sing. This talent the people recognized and appreciated. They marveled that he never once stuttered when singing.

One evening, as one neighbor and his family were visiting at another neighbor's home, Johnnie burst in, very much out of breath from running, very much disturbed over something, but not one word could he manage to say.

Everyone sensed that help was needed, but where or for what no one knew. Then suddenly one of the men said, "Sing it, Johnnie, sing it."

And immediately Johnnie sang lustily, "Your damned old barn's afire!"

—Dale Carpenter, Newport

—&—

Hidden Treasure

Not many years after the settlement of Derby, it was discovered "that in the woods a short distance southwesterly from the residence of the late Nathaniel Severens, upon a slight elevation, in full view of Salem pond (Lake Salem), within a space of a few rods in extent, the

forest trees had at some time been cut down, and in the center of the mound or hillock there was a copper rod standing upright some four or five feet above the surface.

It was supposed that a detachment of Rogers' men passing along the southern shore of the pond had at this point relieved themselves of some of their spoils, the better to make their escape from the pursuing Indians, and buried there some of their plunder.

Many efforts were made by "money diggers" to discover the treasure trove. The work, which was usually done upon the Sabbath, was accompanied with the usual superstitions accompanying such expeditions. Someone adept in the mysteries of the use of the witch hazel was first consulted to locate the supposed treasure. The "diggers" were then instructed that during the work of excavation no word must be spoken, for if, by chance or miscalculation, some voice should give utterance to the joy of discovery, the treasure would instantly disappear. It was claimed that the money or treasure was enclosed in an iron box and was under the immediate guardianship of evil spirits.

When, after much digging, an iron bar struck some solid substance which gave out a sharp, metallic sound, some one of the party spoke the unfortunate cabalistic word and the iron box immediately sank into the ground. No treasure was ever found.

Only recently, Nathaniel Severens' great granddaughter, who for several years lived on this farm, told me that it was not an uncommon thing to have people come to their home and ask if they would allow them to dig for the hidden treasure.

This farm is now owned by Gerald Ryan and is on Route 5A from Derby to West Charleston.

—Mildred B. Hay, Derby

—&—

Throwing Lead

I will tell you the tale of how Lyman shot at a mark, as told to me in my younger days. He used the rifle he took from a Rebel colonel, who, he said, "Acted so like hell, I had to shoot him." Here's the story as I had it from him:

"The boys were shooting at a piece of paper tacked to a small beech tree. They wanted me to shoot. I said 'No!' They persisted. So I told them to go and get my rifle. They did so. I told them to drive a nail in the tree on a level with my eye. Then I marked a spot a considerable distance from the tree. I fired. The boys found a hole,

but no nail! I shot all my ammunition. After each shot, the boys examined the tree, but could find only one hole, and said I hit the tree only once. So I had the boys cut down the tree, and where the nail had been, they took out a lead pencil eight inches long."

—Ralph W. Putnam, Waterbury

—&—

The River Pearls

In the town of Williston, as one drives out from Burlington, one can easily see Gravelly Brook, which curves and winds beautifully in the low lands back of the Mahan farm.

My grandpa and his father had a brickyard near Gravelly Brook. One day they saw, near the bank, a little pocket of fresh-water clams. They broke the clams open and found pearls in them. This encouraged them to search for more until they found quite a lot of them. They brought them home.

My grandmother's sister was there. She had been a music teacher in Brooklyn, N. Y., and had had various contacts with jewelers down there. Finally a jeweler, either in Brooklyn or New York, bought the whole lot of pearls and for quite a considerable sum of money. This money was divided between my grandpa and my Uncle Norman.

Uncle Norman put his share of the money from the river pearls into a beautiful colonial tea set for his wife. Her name was Mary Ann Miller. Her great-great niece is in U. V. M. now, and is to have the tea set. It was really a beautiful set for those days. I imagine it may have cost between $600 and $700.

My grandpa bought a rosewood melodian with his part. This instrument still stands in the back parlor of our house. It's interesting, I think, to know that he taught himself to play it. My sister Marion's wedding march was played on it.

—Dorothy Alling, Williston, as recorded by Clara M. Gardner, Burlington

—&—

"Alf"

One Sunday about seventy years ago, Clarence H. and a friend were walking over the hills in Westford. Clarence was a tall, gangling youth with big feet. The two happened to meet "Alf" Blackmer, also a Westfordite. After a brief greeting, Alf said, "You've heard how Christ walked on the water?" Then, pointing to the feet of Clarence, he said, "He wore them shoes, b'God."

For the encouragement of people with big feet, it might be added

that the said Clarence went to college, was later admitted to the Bar in Iowa, then built up an electrical business in Ohio, inventing many things, and at his death in Ohio was called the Edison of the West, and a millionaire.

Many tales are yet repeated in Westford about the sayings of Alf Blackmer, who was very profane, but "smart." He lived alone in his house all his days. On the floor of his room he had a complicated mathematical problem all worked out. A woman came to clean the house and mopped the figures all off. Alf never forgave her.

It was customary in those days to have the leading minister interview all candidates for a teacher's certificate. Alf went to be examined. The first question the dominie asked him was: "What shape is the earth?" Alf was disgusted, thinking he was given too childish a question, so he replied: "Square, b'God!"

Alf often said that he didn't know much about "gogaphy," but that he was hell on figgers. Which was true. Nobody could give him a problem that he could not answer. He often greeted people, especially youths, by questions such as, "What is the cube root of –?"

He and his brother Hiram worked a farm together. Somebody said to Alf, "You make Hi do all the work. Why don't you do some?" Alf's reply was: "Dammit, somebody's got to do the calculating."

—Frances Hobart, Winooski

—&—

Had To

A Vermonter meets an old friend who is quite deaf and whose wife has just died. Wishing to offer his sympathy, he says to his deaf friend, "Sorry to hear about your wife."

"Can't hear what you said," replies his deaf friend.

"I say I'm sorry your wife is dead."

"Speak louder, can't hear you."

"I'm sorry you buried your wife."

"Had to—she died."

—Stella Vitty Henry, Windsor

—&—

Old Landmark

[*From typewritten script without date belonging to Mrs. Eliza Harrington, formerly of North Ferrisburg.*]

At S. B. Martin's auction last week Thursday the old hotel (North

Ferrisburg) was knocked down to C. S. Martin for $700. The moving of S. B. Martin closed the doors of a hotel that has been open for 80 years and with the exception of possibly five years during that time has been owned by a member of the Martin family. S. B. Martin's grandfather, Stoddard Martin, built the house in 1830. It then contained the office, kitchen, bedroom, parlor on the first floor. Later a plank building that stood on the flat near Lewis Creek was moved and annexed to form an ell. On the passing of Stoddard Martin, his two sons, Carlos and John, came into possession and built the north portion for a ballroom. This was looked upon as a huge folly, and failure was predicted. Still the house continued to do business, and many are the tales that the writer has heard of the doings at the Martin House in the old stagecoach days. All these have passed and gone; scarcely a person is living to recall them.

—&—

Amusing

[*An old lady would recite the following in a monotonous sing-song to amuse the young.—Mabel E. Ware, Burlington.*]

There was an old woman, all skin and bones,
The like before was never known.
She thought she'd go to church one day
To hear the parson preach and pray,
And when she got to the church stile,
She thought she'd rest a little while,
And when she got to the church door,
She thought she'd rest a little more.
She looked up, she looked down,
She saw a body on the ground,
And from the nose down to the chin
The worms crawled out and the worms crawled in.
She then unto the parson said,
"Shall I be thus when I am dead?"
The parson unto her replied,
"YES!"

—&—

Vermont Limericks

A doctor once lived in Montpelier
Who claimed he could most always heal yer;
But if you paid not his bill,

The next time you were ill
A coffin of pine would conceal yer.

There was an old man from Peru
Who dreamt he was eating his shoe.
He awoke in the night
In a terrible fright—
And found it was perfectly true!

—Margaret Foster, Windsor

—&—

Too Much Bear

[*I call attention to the old stories told at "bees" and around the village grocery stoves. These were always localized, and when repeated to me were told by men from men. I never heard these stories told outside Vermont. This one was perhaps the most popular, as I have heard it told in different parts of the state.—Florence E. Waters, Bondville*]

I went blueberrying over on Taylor Hill the other day, but I'll never go there again—too many bears. I was pickin' steady when I happened to look up and there was a bear comin' straight at me on a dead run with his mouth wide open. I set down my pail of berries and reached down his throat, grabbed his tail and turned him wrong side out. The last I saw of him, he was goin' on a dead run right the other way.

—&—

Weather Flags

Three crows flying together are a sign of good weather.
When dry hay makes little whorls in the wind, watch out for rain.
In the spring, when the mountains "roar," one may expect an early thaw.
Sap from a beach tree makes a purple ink.
When maple sap is sweet, there will be a short run.

—Gerard I. Cotnoir, Lowell

—&—

Abused?

My father told me that he drove all of his father's livestock from the farm on the mountain to their new home on Otter Creek when he was only seven years old.

Knowing cattle and how they ramble on the highway, my sympathy

was aroused. Maybe my father had been over-worked at that tender age.

I said, "Father, how large a herd did your father own?"

"One old lame cow," he replied.

—Cora K. Ayres, Pittsford

—&—

Early Sewing Machine

[*From Note Found in Family History*]

In 1867, Levi Parks kept the store in Passumpsic. He went to Boston for supplies for the store. Among different goods he brought from there was a Florence treadle sewing machine with flowers on the legs. Andrew Warden bought one of the machines for his wife. She had never seen a sewing machine before, so had to look over the book of directions, but was bothered by her son Charlie, who was interested in machinery, and kept asking questions—what was this for and that for? and by her daughter Annie, who saw the picture flowers on the legs and crept up to kiss the flowers until Andrew sat down and kept the children away. It was a novelty to the neighbors who came to see the machine and to have sewing done on it. It was used by the family for seventy years before it was placed in the St. Johnsbury Museum.

—Ruth Warrell, Barnet

—&—

Man Must Eat

[*From account book kept in the 1840's by Jno. O. Smith of Panton*]

In the autumn of 1844 had 190 Bushels of Oats, 36 bushels of Rye, 21 bushels of Wheat, 35 bushels of B. Wheat threshed by horse power for every fifteenth bushel & board & housekeeping & help the whole of which amounted to every sixth bushel & the straw being stacked was about ⅓ lost.

Killed 1 cow weighing 600# & 3 hogs weighing 300# each.

Pickled hams and shoulders with a teaspoon full of salt peter rubbed on and laid down in salt. The brine poured on next day and stirred about 4 qts. salt and 1 qt. molasses to 100# meat. (not very good, too salt)

Kingsland mixes fine salt and molasses & salt peter and soaks onto the hams and lets them lay 8 days then pours a brine of salt water onto them but they will not keep through the summer.

Put beef into a weak brine for a few days to take out the blood—

then repacked and covered with brine—qt. salt, 2 oz salt peter to 200 wt of beef.

Saw Geo. Parker cut hog for packing for home use all the ham part was cut out and bones and all the loose flabby fat was tried for the lard. The hams were trimmed round and the trimmings tried. The shoulders were cut small.

—Carol C. Wheatley, South Burlington

—&—

First Aid

[*This tale, typical of Vermont story telling, was repeated to me from Wardsboro. It added zest to the story that the man from whom it was repeated lived at the top of a very long, steep hill.—Florence E. Waters, Bondville*]

Yes, I went down to see the fireworks the Fourth of July. I enjoy seein' fireworks, but my horse don't. He started for home on a gallop, me holdin' onto the reins and yellin' "whoa" at the top of my voice. Just as he turned into our yard, the buggy tipped over and threw me out into a pile of stones. I thought I was dyin', but I reached out and got a handful of snow and rubbed it on my forehead, and managed to drag myself into the house.

—&—

Swim or Sink

Have you heard how Lyman H. taught his sons, George and Abner, to swim? He took them to Mr. W.'s millpond and told them to swim. George obeyed, but Abner was a mean little cuss and would not go into the water.

"So," said Lyman, "I stripped him stark naked, then took him by the collar of his coat and the seat of his pants, and tossed him in. 'Swim or sink!' I said to him." "And the damned little cuss swam to shore like a duck."

—Ralph W. Putnam, Waterbury

—&—

Old Elm Tree

A stately old elm tree stood in the corner of Baxter Park at the head of Elm Street in Derby Line.

Partly wrecked by storms, it was taken down about twenty-five years ago. The trunk was thirty feet in circumference at the base

and hollow throughout. Its age was great, for it was many feet higher than other elms in the vicinity that are known to be 150 years old.

One of the pastimes common on summer evenings was to watch the flight of the swallows that nested there. Hundreds would circle the top, and at some given signal they would pour into the opening of the tree one after the other.

—Irene Selby, Derby Line

—&—

Heard Around Town

Don't know enough to pound salt—busy as a man on the town—don't know enough to suck alum and drool—unhandy as a hoop skirt—always dragging behind like a cow's tail—straight as a yard of pump water—twice around a toothpick and half way back—her head looks as though it had worn out two bodies—busy as a fool in a fit—don't amount to bug dust—guess we can make it if nothing's split more'n it's cracked—honest as the day is long—might as well have asked about the back side of the moon—jumped like a cat out of the wood box—deader than hay—tighter than the bark to a tree—homely as a hedge fence—meek as Moses.

—Lillian E. Terrill, Burlington

—&—

Proof Enough

Sixty years ago in a small Vermont village, an undertaker was noted for his naive salesmanship. I recall an occasion when our neighbor was selecting a casket for his sister-in-law. To demonstrate how beautiful the young woman would look, the little, bewhiskered, old man climbed into the casket and nestled down peacefully on the silk pillow.

—Inez C. Cook, Middlebury

—&—

Solomon's Escape

On the top of Middlebury mountain in a sizable clearing, and halfway between the hamlets of Hancock and Ripton, Vt., lived Solomon Dunham. The cleared space has long since grown over and gone back to Nature.

He kept an hostelry or wayside inn, and was well known and respected, far and near, for his hospitality, his sterling qualities of character—such as honesty, industriousness and decency.

His house was a favorite stopping-place for weary travelers who came afoot, as for instance, pack peddlers, tramps, or people riding in wagons or on horseback. Everyone was welcomed by the genial host. He had a large, shaggy dog, a shepherd, named "Shep," who was quite attached to his master.

Now there was a large body of water not far from his home, known then as "Dunham's Pond," it being mostly his land surrounding it. Nowadays it has the rather fancy name of "Lake Pleaide," with the old reputation of being bottomless, right in the middle of it. This idea, of course, has been proven false, but it is extremely deep there and at other spots. The pond usually froze over, solidly, in the extreme coldness of the winter, as it is high up among the Green Mountains.

So Solomon one day, needing to get to the other side of the little lake and thinking it must be perfectly solid, even in the center, as it was all around the edges, decided to take a short cut directly across the pond, as he had done many times before, thus saving a lot of hard traveling. So he started across, the old dog following him, but stopping to investigate what looked to him like an interesting stump, letting Sol go ahead.

Halfway across the ice broke, letting Sol into the icy water. He managed to clutch hold of the sides of the hole, but before he could crawl out, the thin ice gave way and in he went another time. Again and again he tried to pull himself out of its chilly grasp, the breaking ice each time letting him fall back into the chilly depths. Solomon, realizing that he was tiring and must have help soon, called to his dog, who came bounding toward his master vainly struggling to get out. Shep stopped a few feet away, seemed to be sizing up the situation, whined, barked a bit, then, looking questioningly at Dunham, seemed to be waiting for instructions or a command, which soon came when Sol said, "Go get me a big stick, Shep!"

The dog raced to the shore, grabbed a big stout limb in his teeth, snaking and hauling it within reach of the man's grasp. The stick, drawn across the hole, kept the involuntary swimmer's head above water long enough for the heart and lungs to rest a few moments, but, try as he would, he could not pull himself out, for he was too exhausted! Just when all seemed lost, he felt a sharp, strong pull on his muffler and coat collar, and there was old Shep, dragging, pulling, pushing him out of his cold death trap and across the lake toward the shore and safety.

—Jessie Ballantyne, Chester

Epitaphs

In reading *News and Notes*, also the *Vermont Quarterly*, I have found old epitaphs sent in by members of the Society and thought I might add a few.

From Mountain View Cemetery, West Pawlet, Vermont

Tabitha Stratton, Widow of Samuel Stratton
Died March 16, 1851, age 88.
"There is a debt that is always due.
I have paid it and so must you."

Bulah Jones, Wife of Samuel Stratton
Died Jan. 18, 1803, 35th year of her age.
"Her body here lies in the dust.
Prepare to die, for everyone must."

A.D. 1827
"My dear young friends as you pass by
Stop and reflect that you must die,
Though you are now in youthful bloom,
For you awaits a gaping tomb."

—*Nettie Nelson Jones, West Pawlet*

—&—

Cobb's Hill

Cobb's Hill was a place
Where the Sunday School and Grange
Held out-door picnics.
Long tables and benches were placed
Among the tall pines.
A cook stove rested near
A small stream in the open.
In good weather the crowd
Was usually large and hungry.
If one was in the good graces
Of certain ladies, who were
Noted for their "Cookin',"
He was bound to get a helpin'
Of their specialities.
Helen Flanders' "Inches Thick"
Custard Pie was envied by all.
May Hubbard's "Angel Cake"
Was the last word in pastry.

Isabell Beattie's "Plain Doughnuts"
With their subtle flavor
Was a "Must" with maple syrup.
Many summer visitors attended the doings.
Among them, Col. Everett C. Benton and family.
The Colonel was a native son
And known to some of his friends as "Evvie."
The Benton basket always held
"Suthin' " different in eats,
On one occasion . . . . . Olives.
"Gus" Drew, a personal friend of the Bentons
Was offered some by the Colonel.
Obviously, "Gus" had never tried them before.
He proceeded to devour the relish
Which he immediately spat upon the ground.
Wiping his mouth with the back of his hand,
He roared in a voice that could be heard
All over the picnic area,
"Evvie, your damn plums are sp'ilt!"

—Karl E. Hayes, Town Clerk, Guildhall

[*Note by Mr. Hayes: "I recall the above incident very clearly. Being a very young boy, however, I did not see anything funny about it, but the older folks seemed to get a great 'kick' out of it."*]

Postscript

"No man is fit to be entrusted with the control of the present who is ignorant of the past, and no people who are indifferent to their past need hope to make their future great." —*Author Unknown*

The most tragic figure in terms of Vermont history is undoubtedly that of Seth Warner. At the age of twenty, Warner went with his parents from Roxbury, Conn., to Bennington, where his father, Dr. Benjamin Warner, had purchased land. He became a leading spirit in the pre-Revolutionary activities of the Green Mountain Boys and the outstanding Vermont officer in the Revolution itself. He was one of Ethan Allen's party on the Ticonderoga expedition, capturing Fort Crown Point. In July, 1775, he assumed command of the first regiment of Green Mountain Boys authorized by Congress. In the Fall of 1775, he was with Montgomery in the Canadian campaign, at the siege of St. Johns and the capture of Montreal. In 1776, acting on an urgent summons, he raised a Vermontr egiment, marched to Canada in January weather, remained there until the retreat in May 1776, during which he commanded the rear guard with exceptional skill and success. He was with St. Clair in July, 1777, when Ticonderoga was evacuated, and in command of the rear guard again fought the pursuing British General Fraser to a standstill, the British giving up the chase after St. Clair. The arrival of Warner's Green Mountain men at Bennington turned the tide of battle there. After this battle, Congress made him a colonel, and he continued in command of his Green Mountain Regiment until 1781, although, beginning in 1777, his health, undermined by wounds and hard campaigns, began to fail, and he was not able to serve with his troops continuously. Wounded in action at Fort George in 1780, he was forced into retirement. In 1784, hoping to find relief from his condition, he returned with his family to Roxbury, Conn., where he died in 1784. In the end his mind was affected, and often in delirium he fought over the old battles in which he had taken part.

Warner died at the age of forty-one years. Even the above rough sketch of the crowded years he lived shows that they were years of sacrifice for the sake of Vermont and his country. His reward was illness and poverty, an early death, and practically no recognition in

his lifetime or since by the state he served. The monument you see pictured on the cover is in Roxbury, Conn., and it was erected by the state of Connecticut.

While "ingratitude is legion," as we all know, and time dulls the most sensitive conscience, some day, perhaps, Vermont will remember the debt it owes Warner and do more than name a highway after him. There should be a statue of him opposite that of Allen on the State House portico; his remains in all truth should rest at Hubbardton under a Vermont monument, erected by Vermont; and there should be a fine biography of his life—if for no other reason than for the inspiration generations of young Vermonters would find it. Of these three possibilities mentioned, the last is probably the only feasible objective. Here at VHS we intend to do something about it.

Fortunately, we have a contemporary description of him; so let's look at him across nearly two hundred years—"A man of iron frame and noble personal appearance, standing not less than six feet and two inches in his stocking feet, Seth Warner was possessed of great bodily strength and agility. His features were regular and strongly marked, indicating great mental strength and fixedness of purpose. A broad and intellectual forehead, surmounted with a profusion of nut brown hair, with sparkling blue eyes, gave convincing evidence of an intelligent, courageous and energetic man." He was "distinguished for his courage and self-possession on all occasions, and for the entire confidence with which he always inspired his associates and those under his command."

In the popular mind, the more colorful figure of Allen has overshadowed Warner, but the cool facts of history give Warner equal stature to that of Allen.

* * *

Here on my desk are the remnants of a small book printed in 1833 in Montpelier, Vt., by E. P. Walton, its title, *The Child's Assistant to a Knowledge of the Geography and History of Vermont* by S. R. Hall—third edition with plates. Suppose we glance through it.

The preface states—"It has long been a source of astonishment to the writer of this little work that no facilities have been afforded to children for learning more of the geography and history of the state in which they live." Mr. Hall's astonishment is one hundred and twenty years old, for the *first* textbook of Vermont history for the grades was published a month ago in the year 1952. And we applaud across the years this sound Vermont commonsense—"To teach a child a compend of history, when he is as ignorant of the history of

his native state, as that of the Chinese Empire, is, certainly, anything but the *order of nature.*"

The population of some of the towns, as given in the booklet, in 1830 may startle some of our members—Pownal 1835, Rupert 1318, Shaftsbury 2413, "Brooklyn" 376, Brattleboro 2141, Rockingham 2272, Marlborough 1218, Townshend 1386, Whitingham 1477, Chester 2320, Springfield 2749, Weathersfield 2213, Woodstock 3044, Clarendon 1585, Danby 1362, Mt. Holly 1318, Orwell 1598, Pawlet 1965, Rutland 2753, New Haven 1834, Starksborough 1342, Vergennes 999, Corinth 1953, Thetford 2113, Tunbridge 1920, Washington 1374, Williamstown 1487, Barre 2012, Calais 1539, Danville 2631, Waterford 1358, Morristown 1315, Newport 284, Fairfax 1729, Fairfield 2270, Highgate 2038, St. Albans 2395, Hinesburg 1669, Williston 1608, Alburgh 1239. The changes in population are certainly illuminating, and it is sad to record that the factors bringing these changes have not been studied in the past, nor are they being studied by state leaders in the present. There is no reason under the broad skies why many of these small towns could not be started back to their more prosperous days. We intend to initiate studies which will deal with the sources of these changes.

The Vermont "Gore" is always interesting. Here is the definition by Mr. Hall for the children—"There are gores or small tracts of land lying between towns that were not included in the grants of the towns"—and there is no better definition. Mr. Hall names these as of 1833—Benton's Gore, Avery's Gore, Harris' Gore, Goshen Gore, Warner's Gore, Warren's Gore, Coventry Gore.

The rivers are clearly described, but the youngsters must have had trouble with this—Ompompanoosic River in Vershire. Our Mississquoi River Mr. Hall spells as "Missisque" but says that it should be "Missisco," so named because "missi" means plenty and "kiskoo" means water fowls. The changes we have made out of our wisdom in the names given by the older historians have often not been marked by much intelligence. Lamoille was named "La mouette," French word for gull, but on the "French map of New Discoveries," Mr. Hall says, the name was wrongly spelled, and it has since been called "La Moille."

In discussing the climate, Mr. Hall writes: "The air is usually pure, and no part of the country is more healthful." He mentions a long list of interesting caves—but we intend to visit some of them before telling our members about them. In Dorset there is one eighty feet long and thirty feet wide. As for animals, thirty-six kinds are

mentioned, and "The moose is the largest wild animal in the state, but it is now seldom found." The panther or catamount is referred to, but he notes that "the panther was never numerous in the state." According to recent newspaper accounts its tribe is increasing rapidly, but it was rare evidently in 1833. "Wild doves are numerous, and occasionally peacocks are kept." As for minerals, "lead and silver have been found in Thetford, a rich vein of copper in Strafford, native gold in Newfane."

As for Indians, "A tribe called the Iroquois owned the land in the west part of Vermont and once had their habitations on the lake and on the rivers"—a point of view largely not accepted in later years but amply proved by recent archeological studies by the Society.

The purely historical part of the history is simply and very clearly written. Probably because written less than fifty years after the stirring events of the formation of the state, the account carries a certain intimate flavor we cannot recapture in these more remote days.

* * *

Luckily for Vermont children of today and tomorrow, State Senator Mrs. Mildred C. Hayden (VHS) aided and abetted by former Director Earle W. Newton initiated action in the Vermont legislature which led, this year, to the publication of a Vermont history for our eighth grades through the State Board of Education. The text was written by Edmund Fuller, a New Yorker who escaped with his wife and two children to Shoreham in Vermont and became thoroughly "Vermontized." The 284-page book, fully illustrated, and entitled *Vermont—A History of the Green Mountain State*, is available now for schools and libraries, but cannot be purchased by the public until legislative action is taken this coming session. The book will be carefully reviewed in the *Quarterly* and, later on, can be purchased through our Vermont Bookshelf Service.

* * *

Daniel Webster testified more than once to the values he found in the lyceums of his youth, and many of our early Vermonters who went on to greatness offered the same testimony. The local dramatic groups still survive in the state although growing less in number each year. In a few of the older communities, however, the traditions of great literature still survive, and we can point with pride to Craftsbury Common where under the leadership of Miss Jean Simpson (VHS Curator) The East Hill Players presented on August 10th their

twenty-ninth annual production—Shakespeare's *The Merry Wives of Windsor*—in Academy Hall. Craftsbury Common, lovely in its summer setting with many flower gardens with a colonial touch, should be noted on the summer calendars of our members as a community where the real Vermont can still be seen and felt.

* * *

The Vermont Marble Company in Proctor, Vt., is one of our Vermont businesses alert to the impact of the past on the present. The company has prepared for distribution an attractive reprint of an article, "Marble Valley's UN," by Elizabeth F. Hale, from the *American Heritage*. The article should be noted particularly by students interested in the melting pot theory as it applies to Vermont. The native-stock Vermonter, although his blood-strains are still dominant in the state, is slowly fading in numbers because he is averaging about two and one-half children to a family, according to the last study made. The author in the article referred to develops this theme—

> But when the United Nations awarded to the Vermont Marble Company a contract for the walls of its new headquarters on the banks of New York's East River, these same men promptly pointed out that up there in Proctor they had a United Nations of their own—a typical American melting pot. Yankee, Irish, French-Canadian, Italian, Swede, Finn, Pole, Hungarian, Czech—all mingle freely in this Green Mountain town founded by a Vermont Yankee.

It is worth mentioning that children of these men of the melting pot score high steadily in our Edmunds essay contest in which essays must deal with phases of Vermont history. We trust that the company will be willing to forward copies of the reprint to our members who are interested in both the company and its work and in the melting process by which good citizens and Vermonters are made in the Marble Town.

* * *

In reading Mr. Folsom's account of the naval battle of Plattsburg, I wondered if there was an account that would give a vivid picture of the action as it affected individuals, and here is a glimpse taken from a brochure, *The Battle of Plattsburg—What Historians Say About It*, New York State Centenary Commission, 1914:

> Mr. Brum, the sailing master of the Saratoga, had his clothes torn off by a splinter, while winding the ship. Mr. Vallette, acting lieutenant, had a shot-box, on which he was standing, knocked from under his feet, and he, too, was once knocked down by the head of a seaman. Very few escaped without some accident, and it appears to have been agreed on

both sides to call no man wounded who could keep out of the hospital. Midshipman Lee of the Confiance, who was wounded in the action, thus described the condition of that vessel: "The havoc on both sides is dreadful. I don't think there are more than five of our men out of three hundred but what are killed or wounded. Never was a shower of hail so thick as the shot whistling about our ears. Were you to see my jacket, waist-coat and trousers, you would be astonished how I escaped as I did, for they are literally torn all to rags with shot and splinters; the upper part of my hat was also shot away. *There is one of our marines who was in the Trafalgar action with Lord Nelson who says it was a mere flea-bite in comparison with this.*"

* * *

Those of us who are history-minded are, I imagine, often puzzled and troubled by the terrific intentness with which the present day concentrates on the present as if it held in its turmoil and tension all the answers to our personal and national problems; and the warnings of past ages do not seem to make the slightest impression. The past is very much living, and the present is dying with every passing moment of the day. But we belong to the clan who know how quietly time unclasps the most tightly locked fist, and we see point and meaning beyond our day in this philosophy of history by Joseph Howe, a Canadian statesman:

> A wise nation preserves its records, gathers up its monuments, decorates the tombs of its illustrious dead, repairs its great public structures and fosters national pride and love of country by perpetual reference to the sacrifices and glories of the past.

A.W.P.

SELECTED TITLES FROM THE PUBLICATIONS
of the
VERMONT HISTORICAL SOCIETY
MONTPELIER, VERMONT

Books listed below may be ordered directly at the price indicated. Members of the Society are given a 10 per cent discount on any volume, except those starred.

1. *The Capture of Ticonderoga* by Lucius Chittenden. Documents, notes. 172 pp. $1.00
2. *Biography of Thomas Davenport, Inventor of the Electric Motor* by W. R. Davenport. Illus. Index. 165 pp. $3.00
3. *Vermonters* by D. B. E. Kent. Famous Vermonters, their birthplaces, their records. 187 pp. $1.50
4. *Dake of Castleton* by H. W. Congdon. Vermont's most beautiful buildings. 36 pp., 24 photographs. $1.00
5. *The Story of a Country Medical College; a History of the Clinical School of Medicine and The Vermont Medical College, Woodstock, Vermont 1827–1856* by F. C. Waite. Illus. 213 pp. $3.00
6. *Vermont During the War for Independence . . . Being Three Chapters from the Author's Natural and Civil History of Vermont*, published in 1794, by Samuel Williams. 104 pp. Wrappers. $1.00
7. *People of Wallingford* by B. C. Batcheller. 328 pp. $3.00
8. *History of Londonderry* by A. E. Cudworth. 228 pp. $3.00
9. *History of Marlborough* by E. H. Newton. 330 pp. $3.00
10. *History of Barnard* by W. M. Newton. 2 vols. 879 pp. Illus. Folding maps. $9.00
11. *History of Pomfret* by H. H. Vail. 2 vols. 687 pp. Illus. Folding maps. $5.00
12. *Peacham: The Story of a Vermont Hill Town*. Vol. 1. 494 pp. 29 ill., maps, appendices., bibl., index. $6.00
13. *List of Pensioners of the War of 1812* by B. N. Clark. $1.50
14. *Heads of Families: Second Census of the United States: 1800. The State of Vermont*. Folio, 233 pp. $3.00
15. *The First Medical College in Vermont. Castleton 1818–1862* by Frederick Clayton Waite. 280 pp. 13 ill. Catalog of graduates and non-graduates. Index. $3.00

*16. *Vermont Lease Lands* by Walter T. Bogart. Definitive treatment of question of lease or glebe lands assigned for educational and religious uses. 392 pp. Index. $6.16

*17. *The Vermont Story* by Earle W. Newton. 535 ill. Bibl., index, 281 pp. $7.50

FROM

A LETTER BY GEORGE WASHINGTON

TO

THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS

Valley-Forge, May 12, 1778

Sir,

. . . I have been happy in the exchange, and a visit from lieutenant-colonel Allen. His fortitude and firmness seem to have placed him out of the reach of misfortune. There is an original something in him that commands admiration; and his long captivity and sufferings have only served to increase if possible his enthusiastic zeal. He appears very desirous of rendering his services to the states, and of being employed, and at the same time does not discover any ambition for high rank.—Congress will herewith receive a letter from him; and I doubt not they will make such provision for him as they think proper and suitable. . . .

I have the honor to be, &c.

G.W.

FROM OFFICIAL LETTERS TO THE HONORABLE AMERICAN CONGRESS WRITTEN DURING THE WAR BETWEEN THE UNITED COLONIES AND GREAT-BRITAIN BY HIS EXCELLENCY GEORGE WASHINGTON, COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF OF THE CONTINENTAL FORCES. NOW PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES, VOL. 11, P. 225, NEW-YORK, 1796.